

## The contours of a strong partnership

The Belarusian economy showed growth above the global average for two consecutive years - in 2023 and 2024. The main drivers were industry, construction, trade, and transportation. By the end of 2024, the foreign trade turnover of goods and services of Belarus amounted to more than one hundred billion dollars, having increased by more than five percent compared to 2023. At the same time, domestic exports of goods and services increased by three and a half percent to almost 50 billion dollars compared to 2023. In this context, expanding contacts with Asian countries is the most urgent task for Belarus, as this continent is a very capacious and rapidly expanding market. Back in 2021, the Belarusian-Asian Forum noted that there are still many opportunities to promote Belarusian interests in Asia. But for this purpose, it is necessary to continue systematic work, initiating new formats of contacts in interaction with a number of Asian countries. How are these specific tasks being addressed in terms of prospective interaction in trade and economic, industrial-cooperative and scientific-technological terms? This is the subject of this study.



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## The contours of a strong partnership

*Reserves for successful interaction between Belarus and Asian countries*

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## CHAPTER 1

### To develop robust partnership schemes

The Declaration on Further Development of Economic Processes within the **Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)** until 2030 and for the period until 2045 "Eurasian Economic Way" identifies the task of positioning the EAEU as one of the centres for the formation of the **Greater Eurasian Partnership** as one of the key areas of prospective integration construction, which implies the involvement of all interested regional and global economies into trade, logistics and economic interaction in mutually beneficial formats, based on the unique competitive historical, geographical and economic advantages of the participants. "Mutual benefit, voluntariness, respect for national sovereignties, transparency and combination of specific advantages are the inherent principles of a new type of integration"<sup>1</sup>. The Greater Eurasian Partnership is becoming an effective means of protecting the common economic interests of Asian countries, a platform for their consolidation for the sake of a stable and secure future of both the continent as a whole and any state in the region. Modern **Asia** is 45 independent countries, which are uneven in terms of territory and population, as well as in the level and pace of development. At the same time, this continent is considered one of the most dynamic developing regions of the world. For this reason, the EAEU is finding new forms and ways of economic cooperation here, primarily in the financial, economic and transport and logistics spheres, including with **Iran** and the states of the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**.

In particular, in December 2024, the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council decided to grant **Iran** the status of an observer state to the EAEU. It should be noted that such status is granted to a state interested in mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation with the EAEU and its members and the convergence of legal regulation. "At present, Cuba and Uzbekistan also have observer state status at the EAEU"<sup>2</sup>.

For reference, we note that back in 2018, the EAEU and Iran adopted their first joint document, a temporary free trade agreement, which was "localised, covered few items and did not provide for zero duty rates....",<sup>3</sup>. In December 2023, the parties already signed an agreement on free trade, which opened up a wide range of new opportunities, as well as "will significantly improve the competitiveness of goods of the EAEU member states and through this increase exports to Iran"<sup>4</sup> and in general

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<sup>1</sup> Sergey Glazyev: "The Grand Partnership is a driver of the formation of a new world economic structure". [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaunion.org/news/sergey-glazev-bolshoe-evraziyskoe-partnerstvo-drayver-formirovaniya-novogo-mirokhozvaystvennogo-ukla/>

<sup>2</sup> Iran received the status of an observer to the EAEU [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/iran-poluchil-status-nabliudatelja-nri-eaes-685429-2024/>

<sup>3</sup> Pivovarov, E. EEC: free trade zone between the EAEU and Iran can be created by the end of the year / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/EEK-zona-svobodnoi-torgovli-mezhdu-eaes-i-iranom-mozhet-byt-sozdana-do-kontsa-goda-566030-2023/>

<sup>4</sup> EAEU agreement with Iran on free trade signed in St. Petersburg [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/soglashenie-eaes-s-iranom-o-svobodnoi-torgovle-podpisano-v-sankt-peterburge-607037-2023/>

will contribute to the growth of trade turnover, activation of co-operation and investment cooperation.

In April 2024, the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) approved an action plan aimed at implementing this agreement, which provides for deepening cooperation between the business communities of the parties. In order to create a business dialogue platform, the existing memorandum of cooperation between the EAEU Business Council and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mining and Agriculture dated 25 September 2019 has been amended. "Activities under this platform will be carried out taking into account such areas of sectoral interaction as cooperation in transport, development of multimodal transport, joint projects in research and development, establishment of co-operation links between enterprises, projects of the fuel and energy complex, as well as energy efficiency, energy saving and renewable energy, education, medicine, telecommunications"<sup>5</sup>. In addition, the sides prepared a plan of joint trade facilitation measures, including business forums, exhibitions and business missions. In addition, the Iranian side proposed to hold a presentation of the EAEU in 2025 in Tehran to "raise awareness among Iranian business circles about the Eurasian agenda, as well as the opportunities for foreign business. This initiative is aimed at strengthening mutually beneficial co-operation and expanding commercial ties between EAEU countries and Iranian partners"<sup>6</sup>.

Among the interesting initiatives on the part of the EAEU, in which Iran is already getting involved, is the Eurasian Agroexpress project. It should be recalled that the implementation of a joint project of the EAEU member states to implement accelerated railway and multimodal transport "Eurasian Agroexpress" for the development of regular mutual deliveries of agricultural products and food, as well as export supplies in the Asian and European directions, was supported by the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in February 2022. And in February 2023, the project was scaled to the routes of the North-South corridor. In this context, we are talking about the supply of products from the countries of the Union to Iran, as well as the organisation of large-scale transportations of Iranian vegetables and fruit to the market of the Eurasian Five countries. The point is that with the help of this project "agricultural products will be delivered more quickly, with better quality and fewer intermediaries"<sup>7</sup>. In this regard, it is planned to organise interaction with a large Iranian holding company, which can either directly enter the project or act as a "single window" to organise the supply of agro-industrial products of the P5 countries to Iran and export Iranian products in the opposite direction.

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<sup>5</sup> Pivovarov, E. The EEC Council approved the plan for the implementation of the free trade agreement with Iran / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/sovets-EEK-utverdil-plan-po-realizatsii-soglasenija-o-svobodnoj-torgovle-s-iranom-627572-2024/>

<sup>6</sup> EEC and Iran discussed cooperation plans [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/EEK-i-iran-obsudili-plany-sotrudnichestva/>

<sup>7</sup> Pivovarov, E. Iran joins the EAEU project "Eurasian Agroexpress" / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/iran-podkljuchaetsja-k-realizatsii-proekta-eas-evrazijskij-agroekspress-619975-2024/>



All these facts show that Iran is gradually becoming one of the EAEU's important partners. Suffice it to say that "over the past five years of operation of the temporary trade agreement, trade turnover between the EAEU and Iran has more than doubled - from \$2.4bn in 2019 to \$5.2bn in 2023"<sup>8</sup>. The most promising areas of interaction between the parties are the development of transport and logistics infrastructure, expansion of co-operation ties between enterprises, co-operation in the agro-industrial complex, oil refining and petrochemical industries, scientific research and development. In addition, statistics for 2024 show that for ten months the trade turnover still "increased by 12.8%, exports of goods to Iran increased by 16%, imports - by 8%"<sup>9</sup>.

One last thing. Belarus ratified a free trade agreement between the EAEU and Iran in July 2024 to ensure diversification of export supplies by removing tariff and non-tariff barriers on access to the market of this country for a wide list of goods, as well as improving conditions for trade and economic co-operation. "The opening of the Iranian market through the zeroing of duties will provide exporters of Belarus with more competitive conditions for the supply of goods"<sup>10</sup>. By removing tariff barriers, Iran, whose population has already passed the 80 million mark, can already successfully trade with Belarus. And the Belarusian side has a great chance to promote its machine-building and food products, while enjoying good preferences.

Let us now look at the current issues of interaction between the Eurasian Economic Union and the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations**. In November 2024, the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur hosted the EAEU-ASEAN Business Dialogue, which was attended by more than 350 representatives of political, business and academic circles of the parties. And where it was noted that trade between the two integration platforms is showing steady growth at double-digit rates, which indicates a great potential for the development of multi-vector dialogue, both at the inter-integration and country levels. The key driver of this process is the business community, as "joint expert and business platforms of the EAEU and ASEAN allow to create direct communication between entrepreneurs, eliminate information barriers and create a space of trust. The key task facing the two associations today is to create transparent and understandable conditions for business community interaction"<sup>11</sup>.

ASEAN is an economic association formed in 1967. The members of the association are Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam,

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<sup>8</sup> Pivovarov, E. The EEC is confident that the EAEU-Iran trade will reach a new level / E. Pivovarov // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/v-cek-uvereny-vvyhode-torgovli-caes-i-irana-na-novyi-uroven-637183-2024/>

<sup>9</sup> Bakytzhan Sagintayev: "Dialogue with Iran has a potential for development in a number of directions" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/bakytzhan-sagintaev-dialog-s-iranom-imeet-potentsial-razvitiya-po-selomuryadu-napravleniy/>

<sup>10</sup> Belarus ratified the EAEU free trade agreement with Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-ratifikatsirovala-soglasenie-o-svobodnoj-torgovle-caes-s-iranom-645885-2024/>

<sup>11</sup> Business dialogue between EAEU and ASEAN was held in Malaysia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/biznes-dialog-caes-i-asean-sostoyalsya-v-malayzii/>

Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia. Papua New Guinea and East Timor have observer status. This is one of the largest regional integration associations in Asia with a total gross domestic product exceeding two and a half trillion dollars and a population of about 625 million people. We would like to add that the memorandum of understanding between the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and ASEAN in the field of economic cooperation was signed in November 2018 in Singapore, which created the foundation for the formation of a dialogue platform to discuss a wide range of issues of interaction between integration blocs on the scale of the Eurasian continent. And to implement the memorandum, a Cooperation Programme for 2020-2025 was adopted, which "covers such areas as customs legislation and law enforcement, trade policy, business activities, technical and antitrust regulation, SPS measures, energy, and the functioning of domestic markets"<sup>12</sup>.

In November 2023, the round table "Economic Agenda of the EAEU and ASEAN: Overlapping Interests" highlighted such promising areas of co-operation as technology platforms, food production and information technology being created in the Eurasian five countries. And "the planned launch of a single energy market in the EAEU is potentially interesting for ASEAN countries, which import oil and natural gas, while drug manufacturers from ASEAN countries have the opportunity to work in the EAEU's single pharmaceutical market with a capacity of USD 10 billion"<sup>13</sup>. Besides, if we take into account that by 2045 the EAEU aims to become a self-sufficient, safe, harmoniously developed and attractive macro-region of the polycentric world, achieving economic, technological and intellectual leadership with a high level of well-being of the population, then such a task statement, given the large territory, population, economic potential and dense transport networks of these integration associations, determines new prospects for economic cooperation and civilisational connectivity between the EAEU and ASEAN. The creation of a global free trade zone between the two countries, as well as technological partnership, could become possible mechanisms for realising promising areas of cooperation.

In June 2024, within the framework of the EAEU-ASEAN Business Dialogue, its participants noted that "the two associations need to create a new dimension of dialogue, which will allow to multiply the volume of trade turnover and eliminate existing barriers. These include problems in international settlements and information barriers for business representatives"<sup>14</sup>. And the development of network forms of interaction with the participation of business and scientific circles of the parties will help to bring co-operation to a qualitatively new level. At the same time, more attention should be paid to the diversification of trade and economic cooperation,

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<sup>12</sup> EAEU and ASEAN plan to develop trade and economic co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/caes-i-asean-nlaniruvut-razvivat-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo/>.

<sup>13</sup> Sergey Glazyev: "The EAEU and ASEAN dialogue improves economic connectivity in Eurasia" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/sergey-glazev-dialog-caes-i-asean-uluchshaet-ekonomicheskuyu-svyazannost-v-evrazii/>.

<sup>14</sup> Sergey Glazyev at SPIEF-2024: "The EAEU and ASEAN can use network formats to intensify interaction". [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/sergey-glazev-na-pmef-2024-caes-i-asean-mogut-ispolzovat-setevye-formaty-dlya-aktivizatsii-vzaimodey/>.

deepening dialogue and exchange of practical experience in the field of innovation, digital transformation and increasing market transparency. All the more so as the current points of growth and mutual strengthening of the economies of the two member states are such areas as cooperation in energy efficiency, food security, transport, logistics, finance and tourism.

Returning to the November (2024) EAEU-ASEAN Business Dialogue held in Malaysia, we note that its participants agreed to apply the experience of cooperation and best practices in such areas as artificial intelligence, green economy, big data economy, and to focus the greatest potential for cooperation between business communities on digitalisation, industrial cooperation, food security, transport and logistics, and financial policy. All this can be seen in the examples of interaction between a number of ASEAN countries - **Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar** - and the Eurasian Five.

In particular, 2025 will mark 10 years since the conclusion of the Agreement on free trade between the EAEU countries and **Vietnam**. During this time, the positive dynamics in this area has shown good growth. Suffice it to say that "in 2023 trade turnover increased 1.6 times compared to 2016, and in the first half of 2024 there was an increase in this indicator by 17% compared to the same period of 2023"<sup>15</sup>. At the same time, the arrangements outlined in this agreement currently provide preferences for about 90 per cent of the commodity nomenclature, ensuring duty-free access for virtually all trade.

Back at the fifth meeting of the EAEU-Vietnam Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Free Trade Agreement, held in November 2023, the parties agreed to intensify work on major investment projects, which will undoubtedly provide prospects for further growth in mutual supplies of products. At the same time they discussed "issues of additional liberalisation of access of goods to each other's markets, protective measures, sanitary and phytosanitary regulation, climate agenda, exchange of information in the field of investment"<sup>16</sup>, as well as existing technical barriers to trade, issues of electronic exchange of customs information and rules of origin of goods. In terms of sanitary and phytosanitary regulation, the participants of the meeting considered problems, including access of meat products from Belarus to the Vietnamese market.

In July 2024, the first meeting of the regular EAEU-Vietnam dialogue on market access issues related to the area of technical barriers to trade, products of the pharmaceutical and automotive industries was held in Hanoi. Based on the results of the dialogue, the parties "managed to significantly increase understanding of Vietnam's regulatory systems on specific issues and identify possible further actions to

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<sup>15</sup> Bakytzhan Sagintayev held talks with Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Tinh [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/bakytzhan-sagintaev-provel-peregovory-s-premer-ministrom-vetnama-fam-min-tinemy/>.

<sup>16</sup> Andrey Slepnev: "Further increase in trade with Vietnam will be facilitated by the implementation of joint investment projects" [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: [https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/andrey-slepnev-dalneyshemu-uvlicheniyu-obemov-torgovli-s-vetnamom-budet-sposobstvovat-realizatsiya-/](https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/andrey-slepnev-dalneyshemu-uvlicheniyu-obemov-torgovli-s-vetnamom-budet-sposobstvovat-realizatsiya/).

improve conditions for access of EAEU products to the Vietnamese market"<sup>17</sup>. And in the October 2024 talks, the parties noted the effectiveness of various tools for the development of trade and customs administration, including the introduction and application of digital solutions. And now joint work is underway to prepare a document on the electronic exchange of information on issued certificates between the EAEU and Vietnam. So in 2025, this interaction will undoubtedly reach new heights.

As for **Indonesia**, the EEC concluded a memorandum of co-operation with it in October 2019 to address issues of trade facilitation, customs and technical regulation, and financial market development. And in September 2022, the EEC Council decided to start negotiations with this country to conclude a free trade agreement. After all, "Indonesia is the largest economy in ASEAN and the fourth largest in the world in terms of population, so trade relations with this Asian state have significant potential"<sup>18</sup>. And from April 2023 to July 2024, five rounds of negotiations on a free trade agreement between the EAEU and Indonesia have already taken place. In September 2024, at the Indonesia-EAEU Digital Technology Dialogue, participants noted that "the future agreement lays down mechanisms to strengthen cooperation and cooperation ties between the businesses of our countries in the areas of telecommunications, innovation, digital technologies and e-commerce"<sup>19</sup> and will help connect digital companies to share solutions, technologies, expertise and explore new opportunities for cooperation. It appears that in 2025 the EAEU and Indonesia will reach the final stage of signing this important document.

Finally, as early as 2021, **Myanmar** expressed interest in co-operation with the EAEU, and in June 2023 signed a memorandum of co-operation with the Eurasian Five, which "provides for co-operation in such areas as customs, technical regulation, application of sanitary, veterinary-sanitary and quarantine phytosanitary measures, financial markets, transport, energy, agro-industrial complex..."<sup>20</sup>. On the basis of this document, the parties are already beginning to address specific tasks to remove barriers to trade, exchange information, and work out cooperation mechanisms for the creation of new projects and investments. In April 2024, at the first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Interaction, it was noted that "Myanmar has a geographically advantageous position - it neighbours economically powerful countries such as India and China, located as a bridge connecting Southeast Asia and the Eurasian market"<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> EAEU discussed with Vietnam the issues of access to the market of automotive and pharmaceutical products [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eaes-obsudil-s-vetnamom-voprosy-dostupa-na-rynok-avtomobilnov-i-farmaceuticheskoy-produkcii/>

<sup>18</sup> Zalessky, B. Export growth strategy. Opportunities and challenges of open economy in modern conditions / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 5.

<sup>19</sup> EEC supports the interaction of business communities of the EAEU and Indonesia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eeek-podderzhivaet-vzaimodeystvie-business-soobshchestv-eaes-i-indonezii/>

<sup>20</sup> EEC and Myanmar signed a memorandum of co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/eeek-i-myanmar-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimodeystvii/>

<sup>21</sup> EAEU and Myanmar develop trade and economic co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

For this reason, the establishment of direct large-scale and continuous cooperation through business circles will allow to intensify trade and economic interaction between Myanmar and the EAEU states, develop cooperation in construction, transport links, and create conditions for settlements in national currencies. The idea of business to establish trading houses was also supported, which will increase the supply of goods.

At the negotiations in June 2024, representatives of Myanmar expressed interest in "expanding exports of agricultural products to the EAEU market in order to strengthen food security in the countries of the region"<sup>22</sup>, as well as in co-operation in the production of medicines and pharmaceutical technologies and co-operation in the regulation of this area. And already at the first joint seminar of the EEC and Myanmar in December 2024, they discussed common approaches to a single customs regulation in the EAEU, the application of the "single window" mechanism and the implementation of interstate electronic exchange of information in the customs sphere. It should be noted that the high pace of development of the dialogue between the parties within the framework of the implementation of the memorandum on cooperation and the great potential of the format of joint seminars "allows not only to carry out information exchange, but also to identify points of economic activity and effectively form proposals for the draft agenda of the next meeting of the joint working group"<sup>23</sup>. In 2025, the practice of joint seminars between the EEC and Myanmar on finance, digital economy and agro-industry will be continued to deepen interaction in key areas of cooperation, increase the volume of trade turnover between the EAEU countries and Myanmar and eliminate imbalances in mutual trade.

Let us return to the Greater Eurasian Partnership. As we can see, this project is designed to help create favourable conditions in the Eurasian states for progressive sustainable development, improve the efficiency of industrial relations, and achieve strong and stable economic growth. And the EAEU is already accumulating the potential of Eurasian states on the sustainable development track in order to develop reliable, mutually beneficial and equal co-operation schemes with countries and associations in Asia.

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<https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/caes-i-myanma-razvivayut-torgovo-ekonomicheskoe-sotrudnichestvo/>

<sup>22</sup> Sergey Glazhev: "The key task of cooperation between the EAEU and Myanmar is to eliminate the problem of trade imbalance and involvement of business circles in the sectoral dialogue" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/sergey-glazhev-klvuchevaya-zadacha-sotrudnichestva-caes-i-myanmy-ustranenie-problemy-torgovogo-disbal/>

<sup>23</sup> The cycle of joint seminars between EEC and Myanmar has started [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://eec.eaeunion.org/news/startoval-tsikl-sovmestnykh-seminarov-eeek-i-myanmy-/>

## CHAPTER 2

### Systemic work brings results

Expanding contacts with **Asian** countries is an urgent task for the Republic of Belarus, as this continent is a very capacious and rapidly expanding market. For this reason, Asian partners are important for Belarus in terms of prospective interaction in trade and economic, industrial and co-operative, and scientific and technological . It should be recalled that back in 2021, the Belarusian-Asian Forum noted that "there are still many opportunities to promote Belarusian trade and economic interests in the Asian direction"<sup>24</sup> . But for this purpose, it is necessary to continue systematic work, initiating new formats of contacts in co-operation with a number of Asian countries.

**Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Oman** are among the interesting partners of Belarus on this continent.

As for **Iran**, in October 2023, Tehran hosted the 16th meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Iranian Commission on Economic Cooperation, during which the parties discussed trade and economic, industrial, investment, banking, petrochemical cooperation, as well as healthcare and pharmaceuticals, transport and air services. Belarus and Iran agreed on a plan for further cooperation in promising areas of partnership, which "includes the implementation by the parties in the near future of activities in the areas of industrial cooperation, agriculture and veterinary medicine, health care and pharmaceuticals, transport and cooperation through chambers of commerce and industry"<sup>25</sup> . In addition, the Iranian capital hosted meetings of a mixed working group on oil cooperation, a joint Belarusian-Iranian committee on international road transport, as well as the Iran-Belarus business forum, during which "a cooperation agreement was signed between the Minsk branch of the BelCCI and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, which will give an additional impetus to the development of Belarusian-Iranian business relations"<sup>26</sup> .

Recall that at the 15th meeting of the mixed commission in July 2022, discussing successful bilateral projects and joint promising activities, the participants expressed interest in increasing the volume of trade turnover between the two countries. After all, "in the best years, the sides reached \$250-300 million. Therefore <...> intend to reach a trade turnover within \$500 million in a short period of time"<sup>27</sup> . In March 2023, celebrating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Minsk and Tehran signed a roadmap for comprehensive co-operation for 2023-2026 , which

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<sup>24</sup> Zalesky, B. Vector of co-operation - Asia. Collection of articles / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Belarus and Iran have agreed on a plan of co-operation in promising areas of interaction [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-iran-soglasovali-plan-sotrudnichestva-po-perspektivnym-napravlenijam-vzaimodejstviya-592926-2023/>

<sup>26</sup> Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Minsk and Tehran signed a co-operation agreement [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovo-promyshlennye-palaty-minska-i-tegerana-podpisali-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve-594460-2023/>

<sup>27</sup> Zalesky, B. The Route of Interaction - Asia. Intensification of Belarus' multifaceted relations with the main economic partners on the continent / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 65.



envisaged co-operation on a wide range of issues - from politics and economy to media and tourism. This systematic document allowed the parties to work through a list of specific practical measures, many of which are already being successfully implemented. "Intensive work at various levels has led to a significant increase in trade turnover.

In 2022, trade turnover tripled to the level of 2021. In the current [2023] year, it added another 25 per cent to the same period last year"<sup>28</sup>.

Among Belarusian exporters that are successfully developing the Iranian market, the enterprises of Bellesbumprom Concern stand out. In the first eight months of 2023, they increased their exports to Iran by more than 1.6 times. Belarus supplies "cellulose, plywood, wood boards" to this country"<sup>29</sup>. At the same time, the concern plans to increase exports and expand co-operation with Iranian partners. In particular, Svetlogorsk Pulp and Paperboard Mill supplies bleached pulp to Iran. In October 2023, specialists of the enterprise visited the Islamic Republic to "reach a qualitatively new level of co-operation. We plan to increase the volume of exports, as well as to expand co-operation relations on the supply of chemistry from Iran necessary for the production of 30 pulp"<sup>30</sup>.

When it comes to Belarusian regions interested in actively developing trade and economic relations with Iran, Vitebsk Region can be mentioned. The fact is that since 2022, Vitebsk Region's trade turnover with this country has multiplied, which is due to the need to build new logistics options for export cargoes. At the same time, "among the new types of products that have not been supplied to Iran before are fibreglass fabrics, wood boards, various types of acids and reagents. Vitebsk region continues to supply lumber to Iran - 49% of the trade turnover. The region buys fresh fruit and vegetables, which account for 98% of all purchases from this country, and medical equipment"<sup>31</sup>.

In November 2023, the Belarusian region offered Iranian partners to create co-operation chains in the pharmaceutical sector. After all, a pharmaceutical cluster has already been created in Vitebsk. In addition, Vitebsk specialists are ready to offer Iran petrochemical products, which occupy almost half of the industrial output of the region, ranging from glass fibre to additives for oils. Vitebsk region can also offer food products, carpets, footwear, linen products. The Iranian side also made interesting proposals for co-operation. In particular, "there are many deposits in Iran and the

<sup>28</sup> Industrial co-operation and education. Roman Golovchenko outlined promising areas of co-operation with Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10714>

<sup>29</sup> Enterprises of Bellesbumprom increased export of products to Iran by more than 1.6 times [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriiatija-bellesbumproma-uvlichili-eksport-produktsii-v-iran-bolee-chem-v-16-raza-594471-2023/>

<sup>30</sup> "Bellesbumprom" plans to increase export volumes and expand co-operation ties with Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/bellesbumprom-planiruet-uvlichit-obiemy-eksporta-i-rasshirit-kooperatsionnye-svjazi-s-iranom-594315-2023/>

<sup>31</sup> Vitebsk region offered Iran to work in co-operation in pharmaceuticals [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/vitebskaja-oblast-predlozila-iranu-rabotat-v-kooperatsii-v-farmatsevtike-600855-2023/>

mining industry is developing, so we would like to co-operate with Vitebsk region in this sphere"<sup>32</sup>. So the parties hope not only to continue old ties, but also to find new opportunities for increasing economic partnership.

Minsk and Tehran, which signed a memorandum of co-operation back in 1995 and an agreement on establishing twinning ties in 2006, intend to intensify their partnership in the near future. At the end of 2023, when discussing the interaction between the two capitals, Chairman of Minsk City Executive Committee V. Kukharev stressed that "Minsk is open for dialogue on a wide range of issues - from mutually beneficial trade, supplies of equipment, exchange of delegations to projects in culture and sports"<sup>33</sup>. Cooperation in tourism, health care, and joint ventures is also promising. One of the proposals is to open a trade house of Iran in the Belarusian capital.

A separate conversation is about co-operation in education. In July 2024 in Iran, Belarusian State University (BSU) signed memoranda of understanding with two higher education institutions of this country: the first with Amir Kabir University of Technology and the second with Malek Ashtar University of Technology to develop mutually beneficial international cooperation in a number of areas in education, science and technology. "In particular, it is envisaged to exchange students in study programmes at all levels, teachers and scientists, develop and implement joint educational programmes, carry out research and educational projects, exchange information, teaching materials, organise conferences, seminars, workshops and courses and prepare joint publications"<sup>34</sup>. In addition, Malek Ashtar University of Technology is interested in developing scientific co-operation in the fields of optics, materials science and metallurgy, electrophysics, physics of polymers and composite materials. For reference, BSU cooperates with Iranian institutions within the framework of four open-ended agreements and memoranda. To promote Iranian culture and language within the specialities of the Faculty of International Relations "international relations" and "linguo-country studies" with

Persian language has been studied since 2008, and the Centre of Iranian Studies has been functioning since 2010. Currently, the Department of Oriental Languages employs three teachers of Farsi, and ten citizens from Iran study at BSU.

Speaking about **Saudi Arabia**, it should be recalled that in May 2024, Riyadh hosted the third meeting of the Belarusian-Saudi Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), during which its participants identified practical steps to expand the legal framework, develop cooperation in the areas of industry, investment, standardisation and certification, agriculture, science and technology, education, sports and tourism, medicine, and

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<sup>32</sup> Machine building, petrochemistry. Ambassador of Iran on the possibilities of cooperation with Vitebsk region [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/mashinostroenie-neftehimija-posol-irana-o-vozmozhnostyah-sotrudnichestva-s-vitebskoi-oblastiju-600832-2023/>

<sup>33</sup> Minsk is interested in developing co-operation with Iran at the regional level [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/minsk-i-iran-aktivizirujut-sotrudnichestvo-na-regionalnom-urovne-602411-2023/>

<sup>34</sup> BSU signed memoranda of understanding with two universities of Iran [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/memorandumy-o-vzaimoponimanii-podpisal-bgu-s-dvumja-vuzami-irana-645726-2024/>



security. In addition, the parties noted "significant progress in reactivating the whole range of bilateral political, trade, economic and humanitarian relations between Belarus and Saudi Arabia and agreed to promote the maintenance of high dynamics of bilateral contacts"<sup>35</sup>.

The first two meetings of the BCC were held in 2015 and 2016. At the first one - in Riyadh - the parties established the Belarusian-Saudi Business Council to "become a platform for fruitful interaction between representatives of business circles of the two countries. At the same time, a contract was concluded for the supply of soil mixtures from the Belarusian company EridGrow Production"<sup>36</sup>.<sup>37</sup> The second - in Minsk - was the Belarusian-Saudi Business Forum and Contact and Cooperation Exchange organised under the auspices of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, where representatives of 63 enterprises and organisations from Belarus and 11 companies from Saudi Arabia took part.

It should be noted that the decisions of the third meeting of the SCS focused on the expansion of the legal framework of the Belarusian-Saudi relations. For reference: since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1997, Minsk and Riyadh have adopted about ten documents that have formed the legal framework for bilateral contacts. These include the General Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, signed in 2003 and "regulating bilateral cooperation in trade and economic, investment, educational, scientific and technical, cultural, information, tourism, youth and sports fields"<sup>38</sup>, as well as agreements on avoidance of double taxation and mutual protection of investments signed in 2009.

In January 2024, when a Belarusian delegation led by Foreign Minister S. Aleinik visited Saudi Arabia, the parties worked out the industrial, scientific and business clusters of cooperation between the two countries, focusing on "ways to intensify scientific cooperation, identify new promising research projects and develop contacts between scientists"<sup>39</sup>. In particular, agreements were reached to resume joint work on a number of fundamental and applied projects, as well as to exchange visits of scientists and researchers from the two countries. The sides also discussed Belarus' involvement in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, a large-scale economic diversification programme, opportunities for industrial cooperation, supplies of Belarusian machinery, and prospects for joint projects in third countries.

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<sup>35</sup> On the third meeting of the Joint Committee for Cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: [https://mf.gov.by/press/news\\_mfaZe\\_dc89296\\_bef\\_ae242.html](https://mf.gov.by/press/news_mfaZe_dc89296_bef_ae242.html)

<sup>36</sup> Zalessky, B. Horizons of the far arc. The potential of interaction between the Republic of Belarus and the countries of Asia and Africa / Boris Zalessky. - Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2022. - C. 33.

<sup>37</sup> Business forum "Belarus - Saudi Arabia". [Electronic resource]. - 2016. - URL:

<https://www.cci.by/o-palate/novosti/biznes-forum-belarus-saudovskaya-araviya/#>

<sup>38</sup> Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://export.by/saudi-arabia>

<sup>39</sup> Prospects for new projects in science and economy. Aleinik's visit to Saudi Arabia is completed [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/politics/view/perspektivy-dlja-novykh-proektov-v-nauke-i-ekonomike-zavershen-vizit-aleinika-v-saudovskuiu-araviyu-608909-2024/>

Following the January talks, the sides reached a number of practical agreements that will be implemented this year. For example, Minsk and Riyadh will create a coordinating structure to promote mutual trade. For this purpose, in January this year, "a memorandum of understanding was signed between the National Centre for Marketing [NCM] and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry [of Saudi Arabia]"<sup>40</sup>. And recently, the next very important step was taken: in May, a Belarusian-Saudi business forum was held in Riyadh, co-organised by NCM and the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which signed a memorandum of cooperation. At this forum the attention of Saudi companies was "drawn to the prospects of cooperation in the industrial (BELAZ, Mogilevkhimvolokno, Polotsk-Steklovolokno) and agricultural (Servolux, Vitebsk broiler poultry farm) sectors"<sup>41</sup>. In the same May 2024, Belarus and Saudi Arabia supplemented the contractual legal framework and signed a draft agreement on air traffic, and a memorandum of understanding was adopted between the aviation administrations of the two countries. Another relevant topic of interaction between the parties is the role of exhibitions in the development of trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Saudi Arabia. Even during the first round of political consultations between the foreign ministries in the history of the bilateral relations, held in December 2023 in the Saudi capital, it was noted that by resuming the whole range of bilateral contacts on the basis of the development of economic partnership, the parties would "promote the intensification of direct interaction between the business circles of the two countries, exchange information, encourage participation in exhibitions in the territory of their countries"<sup>42</sup>. In March of this year, the Belarusian side invited Saudi partners to participate in the Belagro agricultural exhibition. As for the participation of Belarusian exporters in Saudi exhibition forums, back in September 2023, Belarus presented a collective national exposition at the Foodex Saudi International Food Industry Exhibition in Riyadh, where 40 countries and more than 600 brands participated. "The Belarusian stand featured the flagships of dairy products: Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1, Slutsk Cheese Plant, Gluboka Dairy Canning Plant, Kalinkovich Dairy Plant, a branch of Rogachev MCC"<sup>43</sup>. And in May of this year, the Saudi capital hosted the 2nd International Food Industry Exhibition Saudi Food Show 2024, which brought together on one exposition platform

<sup>40</sup> Belarus and Saudi Arabia will set up a coordinating structure to promote mutual trade [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-saudovskaja-araviia-sozhdadut-koordiniruiuschuju-strukturu-po-sodejstvuiu-vzaimnoi-torgovle-609070-2024/>

<sup>41</sup> Belarus and Saudi Arabia intensify co-operation between trade institutions [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-saudovskaja-araviia-aktiviziruiut-vzaimodejstvie-mezhdu-institutami-torgovli-633452-2024/>

<sup>42</sup> From tourism to investments. The Belarusian delegation held rich negotiations in Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/ot-turizma-do-investitsij-belorusskaja-delegatsiia-provela-nasvyschnnye-peregovory-v-saudovskoi-aravii-605885-2023/>

<sup>43</sup> Belarus presented its national exposition at the International Food Exhibition Foodex Saudi in Riyadh [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-predstavila-natsionalnuu-ekspozitsiiu-na-mezhdunarodnoi-pischevoi-vystavke-foodex-saudi-v-er-589285-2023/>

more than a thousand major food companies from 97 countries. The Belarusian stand Belarus. The Taste of Nature was presented for the first time at this exhibition forum, where domestic exporters demonstrated a wide range of dairy products, including those made of milk powder, assorted cheeses and desserts. In particular, Slutsk Cheese Factory presented a line of lactose-free dairy products, elite cheeses with ginger, chia seeds, safflower petals, black and white truffle, frozen cheeses of the trademark "Kletskaya Krynachka" and "Yas Belous", as well as an innovative product - A2 milk, which contains milk protein type A2 and lacks beta-casein A1. A wide range of products was shown by one of the leaders of the Belarusian dairy industry - the company "Molochny Mir", including elite hard cheeses "Parmesan", "Maasdam", "Gorodenb", cheese with black truffle, natural milk, natural cream and whipping cream, frozen cheese "Gorodenb", dry and innovative products. "The share of export supplies of the enterprise to the international market is more than 65% with the volume of raw material processing of about 660 thousand tonnes per year"<sup>44</sup>. Milkavita, a leading industry enterprise with a product portfolio of more than 150 items, presented at the exhibition packaged liquid milk and cream with long shelf life, butter, dry dairy products with improved solubility and temperature processing characteristics. And in this respect, Saudi Arabia is one of the main partners of the enterprise.

Returning to the subject of the Belarusian-Saudi Joint Committee on Co-operation, we would like to emphasise that its third meeting clearly demonstrated the parties' focus on achieving concrete results in updating the entire range of trade and economic co-operation. Let us hope that these decisions of the Committee will give a significant impetus to co-operation in other areas of the bilateral relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Finally, another interesting country in the Persian Gulf region is **Oman**. In August 2024, the first Belarus-Oman Business Forum took place in Muscat, the capital of this Middle Eastern country, where representatives of government agencies, specialised departments, and over 70 companies from both countries discussed topical issues of cooperation in the fields of machine building, agriculture, food security, food industry, high technology, logistics, and tourism. During the meeting, the parties stated that they "bet on intensifying Belarusian-Omani cooperation in the whole range of areas"<sup>45</sup> and will try to find effective tools for conducting bilateral trade, establish partnerships in information technologies, and realise the export potential of Belarusian enterprises in the dairy and machine-building industries.

It should be noted that diplomatic relations with this sultanate on the Arabian Peninsula were established in July 1992. During these thirty-odd years, the parties

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<sup>44</sup> Belarusian enterprises present their potential at the exhibition of food industry in Saudi Arabia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/predpriiatia-belarusi-prezentuiut-potentsial-na-vystavke-pischevoi-promyshlennosti-v-saudovskoi-aravii-635857-2024/>

<sup>45</sup> Belarus is working on expanding exports to Oman [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-prorabatvvaet-rasshirenie-eksporta-v-oman-657416-2024/>

signed several agreements - on trade and economic cooperation, mutual protection of investments, avoidance of double taxation, as well as on the establishment of friendly ties between Minsk and Muscat. "In July 2023, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Sultanate of Oman on air communication was signed"<sup>46</sup>. Memoranda of Understanding between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Education, Culture, and Chambers of Commerce and Industry also supplemented the legal framework.

Trade turnover between the countries is formed mainly by Belarusian exports. For example, in 2020, Belarus exported to Oman "dairy products (skimmed and whole milk powder worth USD 347.6 thousand, milk whey worth USD 18.8 thousand), potash fertilizers (USD 328.5 thousand), collectibles and antiques (USD 57.7 thousand)"<sup>47</sup>. However, over the last three years Belarusian exports have slightly decreased. Despite the low level of mutual trade turnover, Belarus calls the Sultanate of Oman the most important partner in the Middle East and focuses "its attention on the development of trade and economic relations and investment cooperation"<sup>48</sup>.

It should be noted that Oman, home to just over five million people, is recognised as the 66th largest economy in the world by the end of 2023. And today the Vision 2040 development strategy is being implemented here - "a 20-year nationwide multi-sectoral document that represents a key reference point for the development of the state. It aims to diversify the economy on the basis of innovations, develop the private sector, and integrate into the world economy"<sup>49</sup>, in order to double the gross domestic product per capita by 2040. Especially since its geographical location provides Oman with significant opportunities to expand trade and economic ties with other nations of the world. In the next few years, the Gulf state will be actively expanding its free economic zones.

Belarusian interests in this country are now linked to trade interests in a number of items. "Today Belarus mainly supplies Oman with dairy products (milk and condensed cream, milk whey), lift equipment, flat rolled products made of iron or non-alloy steel, polymer threads, paper and cardboard products, jams, fruit puree, radiators, fittings for pipelines, measuring and control devices, and grooming cosmetics"<sup>50</sup>. However, the first Belarusian-Omani Business Forum noted serious potential for other export items

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<sup>46</sup> Co-operation in the political sphere [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://egypt.mfa.gov.by/ru/blr-oman/political/>

<sup>47</sup> MART activities [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.mart.gov.by/activity/mezhdunarodnoe-sotrudnichestvo/sotrudnichestvo-s-zakreplennymi-stranami-i-regionami/sotrudnichestvo-s-sultanatom-oman/>

<sup>48</sup> Rachkov: Oman is the most important partner of Belarus in the Middle East [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/rachkov-oman-vazhnejshij-partner-belarusi-na-blizhnem-vostoke-569090-2023/>

<sup>49</sup> Barysevich, N. Belarus has a serious potential for increasing food exports to Oman / N. Barysevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://produkt.by/news/novosti-belarusi/u-belarusi-est-sereznyy-potencial-dlya-naraschivaniva-eksporta>

<sup>50</sup> Barysevich, N. Promising Middle East. We review the horizons of co-operation between Belarus and Oman / N. Borisevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/comments/view/mnogoobeschaischii-blizhnii-vostok-obozrevaem-gorizonty-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-s-omanom-9338/>

as well.

For example, the two countries plan to develop mutual trade through an exchange. The sale of agro-industrial products is seen as a priority. In particular, "it is planned to use the platform of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange [BUTB] to supply milk products produced in Belarus to the Omani market. For this purpose, the first Omani company has already been accredited at the BUTB and intends to take part in exchange trading in the near future."<sup>51</sup> . And for the Omani side the greatest interest is in milk powder, which is widely used in the food industry of the country. Therefore, it is advisable to start exchange trade with Oman with this commodity position. In the future, in addition to dairy products, the range of Belarusian goods supplied to Oman through the BUTB can be expanded to include such items as rapeseed oil, beet pulp and molasses, sugar, amino acids, and feed additives.

The Belarusian Hi-Tech Park (HTP) is also engaging with Oman and has identified areas of mutual interest to develop joint initiatives with the ITHCA Group. This Omani group of companies was established in 2019. It comprises Oman Broadband, Oman Technology Fund, Oman Towers and Space Communications Technology. ITHCA Group's main functions are to actively work on building Oman's IT infrastructure, expanding the sultanate's networks and digital capabilities. It "scales data centres/cloud storage, builds cybersecurity infrastructure, engages with national and international organisations and foreign partners to implement strategic ICT initiatives"<sup>52</sup> . In addition, HTP signed a memorandum of understanding with the Oman National Engineering and Investment Company, which provides services to the country's utilities and engineering sector. This document expresses practical interest in co-operation with HTP residents on projects related to the development of foodtech and VR-technologies.

As for other outcomes of the first Belarusian-Omani Business Forum, the National Centre for Marketing and Price Study of Belarus signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The intention to cooperate between Minsk and Omani dairy plants was also outlined. In addition, the Belarusian delegation visited the free economic zone and the port of Sohar in the province of North Al Batinah, where they discussed possible ways of cooperation and areas for its expansion, stressing the prospects for cooperation in transport and logistics and the creation of joint production enterprises both in the province and in Oman.

In general, these August meetings in Muscat and Sohar showed that "the parties have considerable potential for the development of business cooperation, which now needs

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<sup>51</sup> Belarus and Oman plan to develop mutual trade through the stock exchange [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-oman-planiruiut-razvivat-vzaimnuju-torgovlju-cherez-birzhu-657057-2024>

<sup>52</sup> Hi-Tech Park establishes cooperation with Oman in IT [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/tech/view/park-vysokih-tehnologij-nalazhivaet-vzaimodejstvie-s-omanom-v-sfere-it-657529-2024/>

to be capitalised into concrete projects"<sup>53</sup>. Both in terms of trade and economic and investment co-operation, and in terms of expanding partnerships in the scientific, technical and educational spheres.

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<sup>53</sup> Zalesky, B. Perimeter of the Far Arc. The potential of sustainable partnership in solving the multi-vector interaction. / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 20.

### Develop partnerships both in known in known areas as well as in new areas

In 2024, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) continues to be active in the market of the **People's Republic of China** (PRC) to develop export-import opportunities and increase exchange turnover between the two countries. This is evidenced by the figures: at the beginning of October this year BUTB has already accredited 224 residents from the PRC, three of whom have the status of stockbrokers. And "for seven months of 2024, the amount of transactions of Chinese business entities reached \$84 million, which is 2.6 times more than in the same period of 2023"<sup>54</sup>. At the same time, residents of the Celestial Empire bought and sold mainly timber, meat and dairy products, ferrous metal products, and industrial equipment on the Belarusian exchange platform. Among the effective tools for promoting BUTB to the Chinese market is the participation of this exchange platform in international exhibitions held in different regions of China.

For example, in June this year BUTB took part for the first time in the **international exhibition EXPO "China-Eurasia"** held in Urumqi, the administrative centre of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Taking into account the theme of the exhibition, the main emphasis at the stand of BUTB was made on agricultural products and industrial goods. Visitors were offered to get acquainted with the commodity nomenclature and export-import opportunities of the Belarusian exchange platform, as well as to consult on the issues of accreditation at the exchange and participation in trading. In addition, at the stand of BUTB there was an opportunity to view actual purchase and sale orders placed by Belarusian enterprises at the exchange, which made it possible to conduct substantive negotiations with Chinese importers and exporters. It should be noted that participation in this exhibition forum helped to attract manufacturing and trade enterprises from the whole Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region to BUTB. Through the exchange they can trade with Belarusian companies without intermediaries on a wide range of goods: from cotton fibre and oilseeds to industrial equipment and special machinery. Another important detail: in 2024, the trend towards diversification of the structure of the Belarusian-Chinese exchange turnover became clearer. Thus, "the sum of transactions with goods other than woodworking products increased more than 8 times in January-May. In particular, the exchange platform was used by Chinese producers to supply Belarus with ferrous and non-ferrous metal products, spare parts and components for machinery and equipment, raw materials for the food industry"<sup>55</sup>. The BUTB expects that the share of products

<sup>54</sup> BUTB will help Chinese producers of synthetic fibre to enter the Belarusian market [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/butb-pomozhet-kitajskim-proizvoditeljam-sinteticheskogo-volokna-vviti-na-belorusskii-rynok-652563-2024>

<sup>55</sup> BUTB electronic tools are presented at the EXPO "China-Eurasia" [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/elektronnye-instrumenty-butb-predstavleny-na-ekspo-kitaj-evrazii-a-643984-2024/>



of the agro-industrial complex, metallurgy and light industry in the total volume of exchange trade between Belarus and China will grow as new participants from China's regions come to the trading floor.

In July 2024, thanks to BUTB's participation in the **international aluminium industry exhibition Aluminium China 2024**, held in Shanghai, more than twenty Chinese metal producers announced their readiness to enter the exchange commodity market of Belarus. Through the BUTB "it is planned to supply the Belarusian market with aluminium pipes, profiles, sheets, foil and other demanded products"<sup>56</sup>. Thus, the circle of foreign suppliers of rolled aluminium products, using the Belarusian platform, will expand, and consumers from Belarus will be able to make purchases on more favourable terms. The emergence of new aluminium producers from China should not only have a positive impact on the volume of sales, but also increase the economic effect of the exchange mechanism for Belarusian enterprises in the real sector.

In August this year, in the same Shanghai, the BUTB delegation participated in the **international exhibition of thermal insulation materials and energy-saving technologies TIM Expo Shanghai**, where it held negotiations on cooperation with the leading Chinese producers of synthetic fibres on the issue of selling their products on the exchange trading. And "a number of Chinese companies expressed their readiness to place bids for the sale of the most demanded in Belarus types of fibres on the platform of industrial and consumer goods BUTB. Thus, Belarusian light industry enterprises will be able to purchase the raw materials they need from suppliers from the Celestial Empire verified by the exchange without intermediaries"<sup>57</sup>. This will not only make it possible to increase the efficiency of procurement activities of Belarusian bidders, but will also contribute to further strengthening of trade and economic relations between Belarus and China.

It should be noted that this year the BUTB is paying special attention to the involvement of non-residents of Belarus in exchange trading in industrial and consumer goods. In January-July 2024, deals with such goods were concluded by companies from eight countries, including China, which have become noticeably more active recently. Transactions have become more frequent, and for some commodity items have become regular. For example, this year, spare parts and components for machinery, industrial tools and technological equipment were supplied from China to Belarus. Moreover, these were mainly import-substituting products.

A separate topic in this context is the activity of the BUTB representative office in Shanghai, which opened in 2023. Its specialists already regularly participate in major industry exhibitions, forums, conferences and other business events in China. Direct contact with representatives of Chinese business provides additional opportunities to

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<sup>56</sup> Chinese aluminium producers are ready to enter the exchange market of Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/kitajskie-proizvoditeli-aljuminija-gotovyy-vyjti-na-birzhevoj-rynok-belarusi-645865-2024/>.

<sup>57</sup> BUTB will help Chinese producers of synthetic fibre to enter the Belarusian market [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/butb-pomozhet-kitajskim-proizvoditeliam-sinteticheskogo-volokna-vyjti-na-belorusskij-rynok-652563-2024>



inform potential bidders about BUTB's tools and services, and also simplifies interaction with already accredited companies.

Finally, at the beginning of September 2024, the opportunities for purchasing products of the woodworking industry of Belarus at the BUTB auction were presented at the **International Conference on Cooperation in the Production of Household Goods and Building Materials in China and Central Asia**, which was held in Xi'an, the administrative centre of Shaanxi Province. The event, organised by the International Chamber of Furniture and Décor of China and the Furniture Chamber of Commerce of this province, was attended by about 400 business entities engaged in the production and sale of furniture, building materials and interior items. By involving these companies in exchange trading, the BUTB plans to expand the pool of Chinese importers of Belarusian lumber products, as well as to organise deliveries of wood panels to China, which are especially in demand in the furniture industry of the country.

It is known that in the current year PRC residents are the largest buyers of woodworking products at the exchange platform, but the potential for cooperation in this area is far from being exhausted. "For 9 months of 2024, Chinese participants purchased at the exchange trading almost 672 thousand cubic metres of sawn wood products, 2.4 times exceeding the figure achieved in January - September 2023. The growth of sales is connected with the reduction of sawn timber stocks in the domestic market of China, which stimulates demand for imports from Belarus"<sup>58</sup>. Traditionally, the highest demand from Chinese participants was for softwood sawn timber. At the same time, other types of products of the timber industry, which could be of interest to the Chinese side, are also presented at the auction. In particular, the stock exchange is ready to assist furniture companies from China in purchasing Belarusian chipboard and fibreboard. After all, the leading producers of these goods are accredited at the Belarusian exchange, which will make it much easier for Chinese exporters to enter the Belarusian market.

All these facts demonstrate that BUTB "plans to further increase both exports of Belarusian agricultural products and Chinese imports of metals and metal products by participating in international exhibition events in the Celestial Empire"<sup>59</sup>, in order to develop exchange trading in different regions of China, both in developed commodity areas and in new items that will significantly increase the overall volume of Belarusian-Chinese trade turnover.

In the second half of 2024, BUTB is also expanding co-operation with other countries on the Asian continent, including **Mongolia, South Korea, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Jordan, and Turkey**.

For example, back in June this year, BUTB signed a memorandum of cooperation with

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<sup>58</sup> A large batch of Belarusian cellulose is planned to be realised for export through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/krupnuiu-partiju-belorusskoi-tselliulozy-planirutsia-realizovat-na-eksport-cherez-butb-667638-2024/>.

<sup>59</sup> Zalesky, B. Growth points of the Belarusian economy in the dynamics of global challenges / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 6.

the **Mongolian Commodity Exchange** to combine the resources, technologies and experience of the two exchange platforms and give a new impetus to trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Mongolia. The parties will focus on agro-industrial products. At the same time, "based on the nomenclature of goods currently available on the Belarusian and Mongolian stock exchanges, the most promising items for supplies to Mongolia are sugar and milk products, while Belarus should import raw materials for the textile industry - primarily wool and cashmere"<sup>60</sup>.

Recall that until recently, only Belarusian sugar was exported to Mongolia using the exchange mechanism. In four months of 2024, a little less than four thousand tonnes of this product worth about \$2.5 million were sold to the Mongolian market. And already in May this year, two first deals were concluded at BUTB to supply skimmed milk powder to this East Asian country. "The buyer was a well-known Mongolian producer of dairy and sour-milk products. The total volume of the trial purchase amounted to 73 t. Assistance in attracting the first Mongolian importer of Belarusian dairy products to the exchange trading was provided by the accredited BUTB broker in Mongolia - United Meres Machinery Company".<sup>61</sup>

This fact can be considered a landmark event in the development of Belarusian-Mongolian exchange trade, especially given that the expansion of the commodity nomenclature has a positive effect on the volume of exchange turnover and contributes to the growth of business activity of both sellers from Belarus and buyers from Mongolia. In addition, the parties plan to work out the issue of supplying the Mongolian market with Belarusian sawn timber, which is in high demand in the country's construction sector. It only remains to add that six residents of Mongolia have already been "accredited on the BUTB, one of which has the status of stockbroker. In January-May 2024, the amount of exchange transactions of Mongolian traders reached \$2.5 million"<sup>62</sup>.

Another East Asian country, **the Republic of Korea**, is a very promising market for Belarusian timber companies. Korean residents of BUTB have been participating in the exchange trading in timber products since November 2023, gradually increasing the volume of transactions. In the first half of this year, they purchased almost six thousand cubic metres of softwood lumber. At the end of July 2024, "two companies from the Republic of Korea specialising in the import, production and distribution of wood products announced their readiness to make regular purchases of sawn timber on the exchange platform"<sup>63</sup>. In addition, the issue of supplying wood fuel pellets or

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<sup>60</sup> Commodity exchanges of Belarus and Mongolia plan to co-operate in trade in agricultural products [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/tovarnye-birzhi-belarusi-i-mongolii-planiruiut-sotrudnichestvo-v-torgovle-selhozproduktami-635733-2024/>

<sup>61</sup> Mongolia started buying Belarusian dairy products at the stock exchange trading [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mongoliya-nachala-pokupat-belorusskuyu-molochnuyu-produktsiyu-na-birzhevyy-torgah-634389-2024/>

<sup>62</sup> BUTB will expand co-operation with Mongolian business [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/butb-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-mongolskim-biznesom-638715-2024/>

<sup>63</sup> Importers of forest products from the Republic of Korea are interested in co-operation with BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

pellets to this East Asian country is being worked out. We are talking about the so-called "grey pellets" used for industrial purposes. And this issue, to all appearances, will soon become a practical matter.

**Vietnam** joined the list of BUTB's partners from South-East Asia at the beginning of this autumn. In the first days of September, the pool of foreign buyers of Belarusian milk powder was enlarged by a Vietnamese trading company, which concluded the first exchange transaction with a Belarusian milk processing company using the address mechanism, which has been in effect on BUTB since 9 August. "The purchase volume was 52 tonnes"<sup>64</sup>. It should be noted that in August, buyers from seven new countries came to BUTB to buy milk powder and other domestically produced dairy products.

Now let's move to the Middle East, where Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Syria are among the countries using the domestic exchange platform to import Belarusian-made goods. As of the beginning of October 2024, BUTB had accredited: 26 business entities from the UAE, 6 each from Lebanon and Egypt, 5 each from Syria, 3 each from Jordan, 2 each from Iraq, and 1 each from Oman and Saudi Arabia. The UAE and Lebanon are the leaders in terms of the sum of deals for three quarters. At that, in both cases the dynamics is positive. In particular, "compared to January-September of last year, the turnover of Emirati participants increased in monetary terms by 96 times, and that of Lebanese participants - by 1.5 times. Based on the structure of exchange sales, domestic sawn timber and milk powder are in the greatest demand among Middle Eastern companies. Their specific weight in the total volume of transactions is more than 70%"<sup>65</sup>.

Speaking about landmark events in this context, we can note a number of interesting observations. For example, in early July this year, a UAE resident company purchased feed additives produced in Belarus for the first time via BUTB. The thing is that companies from the Middle East countries had not previously concluded stock exchange transactions on the purchase of domestic feed additives. And these first exchange transactions on the purchase of amino acids, concluded by a company from the UAE, open a new page in the development of exchange trade between Belarus and this Middle Eastern country. Until now, UAE residents have been buying only sawn timber on the exchange. In particular, "in the first half of 2024, the volume of purchases amounted to 29 thousand cubic metres, which is 5.3 times more than in the whole of 2023. The entry of Emirati companies into the exchange market of agricultural products will undoubtedly give an additional impetus to cooperation

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<https://belta.by/economics/view/iuzhnokoreiskie-immortery-lesoproduktsii-zainteresovany-v-sotrudnichestve-s-butb-650959-2024/>

<sup>64</sup> Vietnam has joined the list of buyers of Belarusian dried milk through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/vietnam-popolnil-spisok-pokupatelej-belorusskogo-suhogo-moloka-cherez-butb-658614-2024/>.

<sup>65</sup> Belarusian dairy products were first sold to Jordan through BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belorusskiju-molochnuju-produktsiju-vpervye-prodali-v-jordaniju-cherez-butb-668653-20247/>.

between Belarus and the UAE in the exchange sphere and create prerequisites for further growth of mutual trade turnover"<sup>66</sup>.

Another interesting fact. In September this year, a major dairy distributor headquartered in Dubai (UAE), which serves the Middle East and North Africa region, intends to significantly increase its purchases of skimmed milk powder on the BUTB by the end of the year. In addition to increasing imports of dried milk through the exchange, the Emirati company is considering the possibility of co-operation with Belarus in other commodity items. In particular, the company is considering the purchase of butter and meat products, as well as the organisation of palm oil supplies from Southeast Asia for the Belarusian food industry. It only remains to add that "at the end of January-August 2024, the trade turnover of residents of the United Arab Emirates at the BUTB exceeded \$25.5 million. About 77% of this amount was brought by exports of Belarusian agricultural products"<sup>67</sup>.

**Oman and Jordan** are also planning to use the BUTB platform to supply dairy products produced in Belarus. In the first case, for this purpose, the first Omani company has already been accredited at , which intends to take part in exchange trading in the near future. "In the future, in addition to dairy products, the range of Belarusian goods supplied to Oman via BUTB may be expanded to include such items as rapeseed oil, beet pulp and molasses, sugar, amino acids, feed additives"<sup>68</sup>. In the second case, in October this year BUTB has already registered the first transactions for the sale of dairy products to the Jordanian market. The subject of the trial purchase was skimmed milk powder and whey powder with a total volume of 26 tonnes.

Finally, speaking about **Turkey**, we would like to remind that as of 1 June 2024, 85 Turkish residents were accredited on the BUTB, 19 of which started participating in exchange trading only this year. Until recently, the structure of Belarusian-Turkish exchange turnover was dominated by exports of timber products from Belarus, as well as scrap ferrous metals and man-made fibres. However, in June 2024, a deal to buy sugar was concluded on the BUTB for the first time. The volume of the trial purchase was 136 tonnes. This fact shows that "Turkey, as a country with a developed confectionery industry, is certainly of significant interest in terms of exporting Belarusian sugar and other sugar beet processing products"<sup>69</sup>. And there is confidence that the first deal concluded by a Turkish resident company will serve as a positive signal for other representatives of Turkish business, including chocolate and soft

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<sup>66</sup> A company from the UAE bought Belarusian feed additives for the first time at BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/kompanija-iz-oae-vperve-kupila-belorusskie-kormovye-dobavki-na-butb-644906-2024/>

<sup>67</sup> UAE businesses are ready to increase purchases of milk powder at BUTB [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/biznes-oae-gotov-naraschivat-zakupki-suhogo-moloka-na-butb-662372-2024/>

<sup>68</sup> Zalesky, B. The potential for increasing economic co-operation between Belarus and the countries of the far arc / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 37.

<sup>69</sup> On BUTB the company-resident of Turkey for the first time concluded a deal to buy Belarusian sugar [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/na-butb-kompanija-rezident-turtsii-vperve-zakljuchila-sdelku-na-pokupku-belorusskogo-sahara-640235-2024/>

drinks producers, for whom the Exchange can become a reliable source of raw materials in demand.

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## CHAPTER 4

### **Co-operation in science, technology and innovation is reaching a new level**

#### **innovation co-operation reaches a new level**

In August 2024, during the official visit of Premier Li Qiang of the State Council of **the People's Republic of China** (PRC) to Belarus, the two governments decided to declare 2024-2025 the Years of Cooperation between Belarus and China in Science, Technology and Innovation. On this occasion, a plan of events was signed in Minsk that covers a wide range of areas of bilateral cooperation and provides for joint scientific and technical events, the creation and development of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation platforms, and the implementation of joint scientific and scientific-technical projects, which will make it possible to strengthen sectoral ties in the field of industrial cooperation and become an additional incentive for innovative development. This plan contains 89 activities that will involve 140 organisations - 59 Belarusian and 81 Chinese. These include leading scientific centres of the two countries, sectoral agencies and their subordinate organisations, and major technology corporations. In particular, in the field of information and communication technologies, the plan envisages the development of cooperation between the Ministry of Communications and Informatisation of Belarus and the Chinese corporations Huawei Technologies, ZTE and PhotonSpeak on the development of software, expansion of cooperation in the field of information and communication technologies, including the application of 5G/6G technologies. On the Belarusian side, the High Technology Park, the Velikiy Kamen industrial park, Beltelecom and Promsvyaz will be involved in this work. In addition, in August 2024, a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation in the field of information and communication technologies was signed by the Ministry of Communications and Informatisation of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Informatisation of China, which "provides for the promotion of cooperation in digital transformation, cloud technologies, artificial intelligence, digital medicine, and ICT training"<sup>70</sup>. There are also plans to cooperate on the development of smart cities, the creation of joint production facilities for high-tech products, as well as a Chinese-Belarusian cooperation platform in the field of information and communication technologies.

The Ministry of Industry of Belarus together with the Centre for International Economic and Technical Cooperation of the Ministry of Industry and Informatisation of the People's Republic of China envisages the creation of a joint platform for the implementation of Sino-Belarusian industrial cooperation to find partners, transfer technologies, and develop cooperation with Chinese companies on the supply of technological equipment. Recall that "in March 2023, Belarus and China signed a

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<sup>70</sup> Belarus and China signed a memorandum of understanding in the field of ICT [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-v-oblasti-ikt-656109-2024/>.

comprehensive strategy of joint industrial development, and in November 2023 - a detailed plan to interface the industrial policies of the two countries"<sup>71</sup> to develop industrial cooperation, including through joint production facilities in Belarus and China, attracting high-tech competences for the implementation of investment projects at Belarusian enterprises and establishing direct interaction between the parties. This programme already consists of 30 specific projects in machine-tool construction, automotive, petrochemicals and wood processing. In particular, already "the entire cluster of domestic machine-tool enterprises - from the Gomel Machine-Tool Plant to Krasniy Borets in Orsha - is involved in the implementation of joint industrial development projects with China"<sup>72</sup>. Also, the decisions taken will help to reformat the textile industry, as viscose together with flax and chemical fibres will create a fabric for Belarusians that will become the foundation of the country's textile and clothing industry.

In general, "15 new strategic-level investment projects worth up to three billion dollars are under active consideration with Chinese partners"<sup>73</sup>. Among the most important are: the third stage of the project on deep processing of grain of the Belarusian National Biotechnological Corporation, construction of plants for the production of bleached sulphate pulp and chipboard, organisation of a modern automated automated moulding plant, construction of a new plant for the production of wood chipboard, and construction of a new plant for the production of wood chipboard. moulding,

production engines,

polypropylene, carbide, sodium chlorate, hydrogen peroxide, soda ash.

As for existing Belarusian enterprises, for example, Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) is interested in setting up joint production facilities in China. In September 2024, a roadmap was signed to develop a 350-horsepower tractor with permanent magnet electric drive. MTZ is ready to implement this project with the China-Belarus High-Tech Aerospace Research and Development Centre. Another joint production facility may also be set up in China - for the assembly of BELARUS caterpillar tractors"<sup>74</sup>. In addition, the Belarusian company will buy equipment in China for more than 840 million Belarusian rubles to modernise the melting system for the first foundry shop, an automatic continuous sandblasting chamber with rotary tables. "The MTZ workshops will be replenished with 15 lathes, 7 horizontal, 4 milling centre and 3 horizontal CNC milling machining centres. Over the past year and a half, the company

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<sup>71</sup> Ministries of Industry of Belarus and China: the plan of cooperation can be updated, detailed and expanded [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/economics/view/minpromv-belarusi-i-kitaia-plan-no-sotrudnichestvu-mozhet-byt-aktualizirovan-detalizirovan-i-rasshiren-644949-2024/>

<sup>72</sup> Machine tools, pulp, car. What significant projects Belarus and China are implementing [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/societv/view/stanki-tselliuloza-avtomobil-kakie-znakovye-proekty-realizuiut-belarus-i-kitai-671355-2024/>

<sup>73</sup> Snopkov: strategic projects with China for \$3bn are designed for the medium-term perspective [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/economics/view/snopkov-strategicheskie-proekty-s-kitaem-na-3-mlrd-rasschitanv-na-srednesrochnuiu-perspektivu-655954-2024/>

<sup>74</sup> MTZ is interested in the creation of joint production facilities in China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mtz-zainteresovan-v-sozdanii-sovmestnyh-proizvodstv-v-kitae-662915-2024/>



has received eight CNC machines [from China]."<sup>75</sup> .

Other machine-building enterprises of the republic are also open to production co-operation with Chinese companies. In particular, to organise "joint production of engines for trucks and cars in Belarus"<sup>76</sup> . In this respect, mutually beneficial cooperation options are already being worked out with Guangxi Yuchai Machinery Group Co., Ltd. in order to reach a strategic bilateral project providing for deep localisation.

Another interesting example is Belshina, which together with the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU) is strengthening its partnership with leading Chinese tyre companies and scientific organisations in that country. Back in April this year, Belshina and BSTU signed a memorandum of co-operation with the Qingdao University of Science and Technology and the Chinese company MESNAC - the leading manufacturer of rubber equipment in the Celestial Empire with a global geography of supply. In this document, the parties envisage cooperation in education, as well as research and development on improving the properties of elastomeric composites for tyres and rubber products. It means that the Belarusian tyre manufacturer and one of the best universities in Belarus for training engineering personnel, including for the chemical industry, are working together to improve the quality of rubber compounds, produce new sizes of agricultural tyres, as well as improve the performance characteristics of oversized tyres for effective import substitution. By signing the memorandum, the parties plan to carry out joint projects related to "improving the performance of all-metal cord extra-large tyres of 57-inch diameter radial design, using original technologies and equipment of the leading Chinese manufacturer"<sup>77</sup> . The memorandum is expected to bring the parties to a new level of co-operation. Given the prospective participation of Qingdao University of Science and Technology and Belarusian State Technological University in the projects, emphasis will also be placed on scientific research in the tyre industry and the training of highly qualified personnel for production.

The adopted plans also "provide for the establishment in Minsk of a project office of the China Technology Transfer Centre of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation member states, the activities of which are supervised by the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China"<sup>78</sup> . This will facilitate both the attraction of advanced foreign technologies to Belarus and the commercialisation of

<sup>75</sup> MTZ will purchase more than 30 units of equipment from China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mtz-zakupit-boleedinitis-oborudovanija-iz-kitaj-662946-2024/>

<sup>76</sup> Naumovich: Belarusian machine-building enterprises are open to co-operation with Chinese companies [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/naumovich-belorusskie-predpriiatia-mashinostroeniia-otkrvtv-k-kooperatsii-s-kitaiskimi-kompaniiami-665797-2024/>

<sup>77</sup> "Belshina" together with BSTU strengthens partnership with leading Chinese tyre companies [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belshina-sovmestno-s-bgtu-ukrepliaet-partnerstvo-s-veduschimi-kitaiskimi-shinnymi-kompaniiami-627709-2024/>

<sup>78</sup> Start of the Years of Cooperation between Belarus and China in Science, Technology and Innovation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/dan-start-godam-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-iknr-v-oblasti-nauki-tehnologii-i-innovatsij-656188-2024/>



the results of Belarusian scientific and innovation organisations' activities abroad. In the field of medicine, the Ministry of Health of Belarus and the Centre for International Exchange and Cooperation of the State Health Committee of China will cooperate on the exchange of innovations and technologies. And the Belneftekhim Concern together with the Oil and Gas Resources Research Centre of the Chinese Geological Survey will cooperate in exchanging technologies for geological research, exploration and development of oil and gas resources.

In addition, the parties will continue to develop the Great Stone Park as an international industrial and logistics cluster with a focus on investment, technology, and the development of traditional and innovative Chinese medicine. "Today, the park has 134 residents from 13 countries with an investment volume of \$1.5bn. More than half of the residents are companies with Chinese capital"<sup>79</sup>. In the first seven months of 2024, 18 new companies have already come to the park. It should be noted that in July of this year a meeting of the working group on the industrial park was held, which outlined the priority areas for the further growth of Velikiy Kamen. Among the main prospects is the attraction of new residents from China with their advanced experience and anchor projects that will be able to gather their partners around them. The second direction is the continued construction of Great Stone's infrastructure to prepare sites for new production facilities. Especially since "the construction of the infrastructure of the first stage of the central part of the park is to begin", as well as the creation of a multimodal railway terminal"<sup>80</sup>. Thirdly, it is the development of a medical cluster in the industrial park. Suffice it to say that in the first half of 2024, five companies have already joined the medical cluster of Veliky Kamen, and new Chinese companies are on their way.

Finally, in order to increase the economic efficiency of joint activities, the Belarusian State Committee for Science and Technology and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China will hold a competition of flagship scientific and technological projects. For this purpose, "20 projects for joint implementation in 2024-2026 in the fields of ICT, biotechnology and medicine, mechanical engineering, new materials" have been approved<sup>81</sup>. As a result of this competition, it is planned to select three large-scale joint projects, the results of which should be the creation of advanced technologies and the establishment of joint ventures or industrial technology centres. Based on the results of joint research and development, Belarus and China will "work on the creation of joint legal entities, which will be used to manufacture products to enter Belarusian, Chinese and maybe

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<sup>79</sup> Roman Golovenko: In the conditions of instability in the world Belarus and China continue to build mutually beneficial cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <http://pda.government.gov.by/ru/content/10994>

<sup>80</sup> Chebotar: "Great Stone" is one of the key priorities in the development of Belarusian-Chinese cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/chebotar-velikij-kamen-odin-iz-kljuchevykh-prioritetov-razvitiia-belorussko-kitajskogo-sotrudnichestva-649217-2024/>

<sup>81</sup> Belarus and China approved 20 joint scientific and technical projects for 2024-2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-utverdili-20-sovmestnykh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-na-2024-2026-gody-656073-2024/>

even third markets"<sup>82</sup>.

In line with this theme, a branch of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS) will be established in China, which will become a Sino-Belarusian co-operation platform to promote interaction between universities, research institutes and enterprises of the two countries in the field of education, scientific research and implementation of achievements. "The main areas of cooperation within the branch are aerospace engineering and space sciences, materials science and composite materials, optics and optoelectronics, production of high-tech equipment and advanced devices, microelectronics and digital intelligence, biotechnology and pharmacology"<sup>83</sup>. In this regard, such cooperation mechanisms as exchange of highly qualified Chinese and Belarusian experts, organisation of training of highly qualified researchers, joint training of master's and doctoral students, organisation of internships and training, initiation of joint research and development by the organisations of the parties, promotion of mutual introduction of technologies and achievements, establishment of joint laboratories within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative will be envisaged. For this purpose, in August this year a framework agreement on strategic cooperation was signed between the NAS of Belarus and the State Administration of the People's Republic of China for Foreign Experts, which is aimed at attracting exports by organising technical internships for Chinese researchers in the Great Stone Industrial Park and relevant research organisations of the NAS of Belarus on a contractual basis. The main areas for internships are: space utilisation and exploration, new energy sources and advanced energy, optoelectronics and high-tech equipment, intelligent manufacturing, new materials, digitalisation and artificial intelligence.

All these documents and the launch of several new industrial projects show that the parties see the integration of Belarusian competences and Chinese technologies as a key element in building a joint future. It is clear that "the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for joint industrial development and the preparation of detailed plans for industrial policy interface <...> will give concrete practical content to the new status of the relationship between the two countries - an all-weather and comprehensive strategic partnership"<sup>84</sup>. For this reason, cooperation with China will allow Belarus to implement its ambitious modernisation and technical re-equipment plans.

Returning to the results of the official visit of Premier Li Qiang of the State Council of the People's Republic of China to Belarus, it should be noted that in addition to the documents revealing the potential for developing and deepening industrial cooperation, scientific, technical and innovation interaction, agreements,

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<sup>82</sup> Belarus and China will create legal entities for the production of products based on joint developments [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitai-budut-sozdavat-iuritsa-dlia-proizvodstva-produktsii-na-osnove-sovmestnyh-razrabotok-656197-2024/>

<sup>83</sup> A branch of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus will be created in China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/filial-nan-belarusi-sozhdadut-v-kitae-656108-2024/>

<sup>84</sup> Roman Golovchenko: Trade turnover between Belarus and China has grown 140 times in 30 years [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <http://www.government.by/ru/content/10993>

memorandums and plans were signed in Minsk in other areas as well. For example, this is an intergovernmental agreement on trade in services and investment, which envisages the creation of a free trade zone in services between the two countries, a transparent, liberal and favourable investment regime to attract investment. Also, the Belarusian Ministry of Economy and the Chinese State Committee for Development and Reform signed a "practice-oriented cooperation plan to strengthen the interface between the Belt and Road Initiative and the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of Belarus". The document contains about 60 measures and projects to be implemented between the competent departments of the two countries.

<sup>85</sup>

As for the Belarusian-Chinese regional dimension, "in-depth plans for the joint development of the provinces of China and the regions of Belarus" were signed in Minsk<sup>86</sup>. Firstly, between Minsk Region and the city of Chongqing, where the following projects will be implemented: production of reagents and equipment for diagnostics, unmanned aerial vehicles, car seats, preparations of traditional Chinese medicine, and assembly of industrial robots. Secondly, between Mogilev region and Shaanxi province, where the main directions of development in trade and economic and investment spheres, education and culture are defined. Seven more similar in-depth plans for the joint development of Belarusian and Chinese regions were also supported in this context.

So Belarus and China, continuing to build mutually beneficial co-operation, in these August days of 2024, identified further specific tasks, plans and future directions, showing the exemplary nature of an all-weather and all-round strategic partnership in the new era despite the overall unstable situation in the global economy.

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<sup>85</sup> BNBK and "Great Stone": Belarus and China agreed on new major investment projects [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/economics/view/bnbk-i-velikii-kamen-belarus-i-kitai-dogovorilis-o-novyh-krupnyh-investiroekhtah-656105-2024/>

<sup>86</sup> Zalesky, B. Dynamics of successful partnership. Internal and external reserves of progressive movement of the Belarusian economy / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 43.

### From in-depth plans - to project realisation

In August 2024, Li Qiang, Premier of the State Council of the **People's Republic of China** (PRC), paid an official visit to Belarus, during which a number of documents were signed, revealing the potential of Sino-Belarusian cooperation in trade, investment, development and deepening of industrial cooperation, scientific and technical cooperation, as well as in-depth plans for the joint development of the provinces of China and the regions of Belarus.

Among the participants in this interregional co-operation are, first of all, **Minsk Oblast** and the **city of Chongqing**. This city is one of the four largest Chinese centralised cities with more than thirty million people. The in-depth plan includes such projects as "production of reagents and diagnostic equipment, unmanned aerial vehicles, car seats, traditional Chinese medicine products, assembly of industrial robots, and integrated logistics"<sup>87</sup>.

It should be recalled that the capital region of Belarus signed a co-operation agreement with this Chinese city back in 2002. In March 2017, twinning relations were established between the regions. In June last year, during the opening of the exhibition of Chinese goods and services at the site of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park "Great Stone", where the thematic exposition of the Chongqing Export Goods Exhibition Pavilion was shown and where "more than 20 city enterprises on an area of about 300 square metres placed the products of mechanical engineering, including cars, motorbikes and components"<sup>88</sup>, the two sides agreed to intensify co-operation in various fields.

A month later, Minsk Region and the city of Chongqing signed a roadmap for 2023-2024 to develop co-operation in the production of reagents, education, tourism, and logistics. "Another promising direction is the creation of a JV for the production of electric cars with any degree of localisation"<sup>89</sup>. Especially since Chongqing's powerful industrial base in the field of mechanical engineering is of interest to Belarusian companies in the context of modernising production facilities with the use of modern Chinese technologies, creating new joint automotive assembly plants, importing components and auto parts. "As an equally promising area, the parties identified cooperation in the field of healthcare development, including elaboration of the establishment of a research and development centre and production facilities in the

<sup>87</sup> From trade and investment to science and cinema. Belarus and China signed a weighty package of documents on co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/ot-torgovli-i-investitsij-do-nauki-i-kino-belarus-i-kitaj-podpisali-vesomyj-paket-dokumentov-o-656104-2024>

<sup>88</sup> Zalesky, B. Potential for realising the agreements reached / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 36.

<sup>89</sup> From medicine to economy and twinning ties. Minsk region and Chongqing signed a road map of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/ot-meditsiny-do-ekonomiki-i-pobratimskih-svjazej-minskaja-oblast-i-chuntsin-podpisali-dorozhnuju-kartu-581301-2023/>

field of traditional Chinese medicine on the site of the Great Stone Industrial Park"<sup>90</sup>, cooperation at the level of medical institutions.

The development of twinning contacts between the Belarusian capital region and the Chinese city continued in May 2024 in Chongqing, where several important events took place:

- 1) VI International Trade and Investment Fair of Western China;
- 2) Chongqing Twin Cities Economic Co-operation Forum;
- 3) Belarus-Chongqing Business Forum.

As for the trade and investment fair, the central platform was given to the guests of honour - Minsk Region and the China-Belarus Industrial Park "Great Stone", which is located in the Belarusian capital region. Minsk Region enterprises producing meat and dairy products, bakery, confectionery, alcoholic beverages and cosmetics were invited to participate in the fair. In addition, this pavilion was set up to reveal the multifaceted tourist potential and modern educational opportunities of Minsk region and the Republic of Belarus as a whole.

Speaking about the Chongqing Sister Cities Economic Cooperation Forum, it was attended by representatives of 48 cities from 31 countries with which this Chinese city has established sister city relations. The motto of this year's forum was "Deepening regional co-operation and promoting common development". Its participants discussed investment opportunities and new points of contact for economic and technological interregional co-operation, as well as green policy.

Finally, at the business forum "Belarus - Chongqing" 13 agreements on cooperation and commercial contracts for the supply of meat and dairy products, confectionery products totalling about \$31 million were "signed"<sup>91</sup>, and mutual projects on investment cooperation in the spheres of production of robotics, auto components and medical equipment were outlined.

If we talk more specifically about these investment projects, we can name, for example, the company Chongqing Qiteng Robot, which produces wheeled and suspended inspection robots, machines for working in extreme conditions - at high temperatures, in toxic and flammable industries, and in underground mining. It was founded in 2010 by students from Chongqing Engineering University, and now it has become a leader in emergency safety in China. And today the company "is ready to invest in opening its own subsidiary in Belarus in Velikiy Kamen with local assembly and creation of an electronic data storage server for specific projects. The company is also ready to establish a joint production with a Belarusian <sup>92</sup> partner"<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>90</sup> Brantsevich stated about positive dynamics in trade and economic co-operation between Belarus and Chongqing [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/special/economics/view/brantsevich-zajavila-o-pozitivnoj-dinamike-v-torgovo-ekonomicheskoy-sotrudnichestvo-belarusi-i-581186-2023/>

<sup>91</sup> Belarus and Chongqing signed contracts for the supply of meat and dairy products worth about \$31 million [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-chungsin-podpisali-kontrakty-na-postavku-mjasno-molochnoj-produktsii-na-summu-okolo-31-mln-637082-2024/>

<sup>92</sup> In the "Great Stone" may appear the enterprise for the production of robots [Electronic resource]. - 2024. -

Another example: Chengju Chonghua Seating, which produces car seats. This Chinese factory "is considering the establishment of a joint production in Belarus to meet the requirements of our country [Belarus]"<sup>93</sup>. It is possible that this manufacturer will enter into co-operation with the BELJI plant. In May 2024, in Chongqing, the Belarusian side got acquainted with medical equipment from another Chinese manufacturer, Zybio, which "specialises in research and development of reagents and equipment for in vitro diagnostics, immunoanalysis and molecular diagnostics, haematology and microbiology"<sup>94</sup>. As a result, Minsk region will send specialists to Chongqing to thoroughly study the Zybio technique and its operation in hospital conditions. And if the results are positive, new Chinese medical equipment will appear in Minsk Region hospitals.

Returning to the plan of in-depth cooperation between Minsk Region and Chongqing, it should be noted that the Belarusian region has been actively increasing trade turnover with China in recent years. In particular, at the end of the first half of 2023, the parties' trade turnover exceeded \$1.25 billion. "Minsk region exports to China poultry meat, dairy products, frozen beef, wood products, flax fibre <...>. Automatic information processing machines and their units, auto parts, telephone sets, television receivers"<sup>95</sup>. With the appearance of the new plan, it seems that interregional cooperation between Minsk Region and Chongqing will soon be filled with new concrete projects, to develop production cooperation and attract high-tech competences for the implementation of investment projects at the enterprises of Minsk Region, establishing direct interaction with Chinese partners.

This summer, Minsk Region took a new step in co-operation with another region of China - **Guangdong Province** - by signing a roadmap of co-operation, which marks a new period in the relations between the two regions. The parties, which have been closely co-operating for more than ten years, believe that "the signing of the roadmap is an important signal for the business of our two countries"<sup>96</sup>. After all, today it is necessary to look for new points of contact. In particular, in the fields of agriculture, car manufacturing, and medicine.

For example, interesting projects in this regard may be implemented in the Belarusian capital region with the Chinese agricultural holding Guangdong Agribusiness Group Corporation, which is engaged in large-scale trade, rubber and sugar cane production.

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URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/v-velikom-kamne-mozhet-poiavitsia-predpriatie-po-proizvodstvu-robotov-636330-2024/>

<sup>93</sup> Turchin familiarised himself with the production of automotive components in Chongqing [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/special/society/view/turchin-poznakomilsia-s-proizvodstvom-avtokomponentov-v-chuntsine-636362-2024/>

<sup>94</sup> Minsk region medics are planned to be sent to Chongqing to study new equipment [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/medikov-minskoi-oblasti-planiruiut-napravit-v-chuntsin-dlia-izuchenija-novogo-oborudovaniia-636079-2024/>

<sup>95</sup> Minsk region and Chinese Chongqing will determine the road map of cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/minskaia-oblast-i-kitajskij-chuntsin-opredeliat-dorozhnuuiu-kartu-sotrudnichestva-580980-2023/>

<sup>96</sup> Turchin and the governor of the Chinese province of Guangdong signed a road map [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/turchin-i-gubernator-kitaj-skoj-provmsii-guandun-podpisali-dorozhnuuiu-kartu-651136-2024/>



The holding's enterprises also specialise in meat and dairy cattle breeding, grain cultivation, and oil production. "The corporation has a vocational college where students are trained in construction specialities, technologies. Also, the agricultural holding has 38 hospitals, where, among others, the company's employees are served"<sup>97</sup>. So, all these areas can become promising in terms of co-operation with Belarusian partners.

Among the possible partners of Minshchina enterprises from Guangdong Province are also the GAC Aion electric car manufacturing plant and Guangzhou Baiyunshan Zhongyi Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. In the first case, production is carried out on a full cycle and includes research and development, as well as the sale of products and after-sales service. In the second case, this manufacturer produces drugs to improve eyesight, diabetes drugs, and recovery pills for brain ischaemia and the consequences of this disease. Representatives of Minsk Oblast have already discussed the prospects and options of co-operation with these Chinese partners. So let's hope that these negotiations will soon be followed by concrete actions.

The People's Republic of China is a strategic partner of another Belarusian region - **Mogilev**, with which the development of cooperation, thanks to systematic work, continues to only deepen, reaching a new level of interaction. Suffice it to say that over the last ten years the export of goods from this Belarusian region to the People's Republic of China has grown 18 times. "The main export items from the Mogilev region to China remain beef and poultry meat, dairy products, woodworking products, carbon black, flax, chocolate, various waters, strong alcoholic beverages"<sup>98</sup>. In addition, today three enterprises of Mogilev region have permission to supply products to the Celestial Empire: open joint-stock companies "Babushkina Krynka", Mogilev and Bobruisk meat processing plants. The bulk of Chinese imports this year are acrylic polymers, complex synthetic yarns, glue and adhesives, opoks and pallets for metal foundry production, electrical transformers, household appliances, and passenger cars. "In January - April 2024, trade turnover between the Mogilev region and China totalled \$57.4 million - a growth rate of 102.2% compared to the same period of 2023. Export of services in January - April 2024 amounted to \$867.5 thousand (growth rate of over 193%) The basis of export was education services, the specific weight of which is almost 81%"<sup>99</sup>.

At the interregional level, the Belarusian eastern region is currently actively co-operating with such Chinese provinces as Henan, Jiangsu, Hunan, Shaanxi and the city of Tianjin. Besides, at the level of cities and districts of the Mogilev region more than

<sup>97</sup> From electric cars to endocrine raw materials: the delegation of Minsk region visits Guangdong province [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/ot-elektrokarov-do-endokrinnogo-svriia-delegatsiia-minskoi-oblasti-poseschaet-provintsiju-guandun-651244-2024/>.

<sup>98</sup> Export of goods from Mogilev region to China has grown 18 times in the last ten years [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/eksport-tovarov-iz-mogilevskoi-oblasti-v-kitai-za-poslednie-desiat-let-vvros-v-18-raz-575841-2023>

<sup>99</sup> Platform for the implementation of common projects: Belarusian-Chinese business forum was held in Mogilev [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/ploschadka-dlia-vyhoda-na-realizatsiiu-obschih-proektov-belorussko-kitaiskii-biznes-forum-proshel-v-643622-2024/>

ten documents of international character have been concluded with the regions of China. The youngest partner of Mogilev region in the Celestial Empire was **Tianjin** - one of the four cities of central subordination in 2019. It is a major port hub in the north of China, which has established communication and transport routes with more than 500 ports of other countries. It is a city with an integrated production chain in many industries and extensive educational and scientific resources, with more than 50 universities.

In March 2023, the parties signed an Action Plan for the development of co-operation for 2023-2025. And in May last year Tianjin hosted the Mogilev Region Week. Then, participating in the forum "Tianjin - Gateway to China", more than twenty enterprises of Mogilev region showed their export potential. As a result of these negotiations, agreements were reached for the supply of dairy and meat products, commercial offers were received for the export of Belarusian sawn timber, and contacts were established for further co-operation in importing goods from China to the trade networks of the Mogilev region. At the same time the documents on co-operation between Mogilev and the new Binhai district of Tianjin, FEZ "Mogilev" and TEDA economic zone, the Mogilev branch of the BelCCI and the Chinese Council for the Promotion of International Trade of Tianjin were signed. Also Agreements have been reached to set up a joint milk powder processing facility in Tianjin"<sup>100</sup>.

A year and a bit later, in June 2024, a response action - Tianjin City Week in the Mogilev region - took place:

- 1) an exhibition of Chinese products from organisations in this city;
- 2) regional Belarusian-Chinese business forum  
"Mogilev region and the city of Tianjin: 5 years of co-operation";
- 3) Mogilev-Tianjin Education Cooperation Forum.

In addition, the parties signed a "roadmap for the development of cooperation between Mogilev and the new Binhai district in the fields of economy, trade, culture, education, tourism for 2024-2025; an agreement between the administrative committee of the port free trade zone Tianjin PRC and the administration of the free economic zone "Mogilev"; an agreement on cooperation between the Tianjin Museum and the Mogilev Regional Art Museum named after P.V. Maslennikov. P.V. Maslennikov"<sup>101</sup>. During these events, the parties outlined their proposals for joint co-operation in various sectors. For example, Mogilev Region believes that at this stage of relations it is advisable to move from simple trade to deeper co-operation and the creation of joint projects. If we take livestock breeding, Chinese partners can create new complexes of

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<sup>100</sup> Mogilev region will present construction and industrial investment projects at the exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://belta.by/regions/view/mogilevskaja-oblast-predstavit-stroitelnye-i-promyshlennye-investproekty-na-vystavke-v-shanhae-595292-2023/>

<sup>101</sup> Business forum, exhibitions and competitions. Tianjin City Week starts in Mogilev region [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/business/view/biznes-forum-vystavki-i-sorevnovaniya-nedelia-goroda-tianszin-startuet-v-mogilevskoj-oblasti-643224-2024/>



meat direction in Mogilev region for further processing of beef and supply to the Chinese market. "The second direction is minerals: The [Mogilev] region is rich in deposits of peat, sapropel, and trepel, the use of which in combination with mineral and organic fertilisers is an effective means of stimulating plant development and increasing crop yields"<sup>102</sup>. After all, this natural mineral supplement is used to enrich the ration of cattle to replenish the missing macro- and microelements in feed. Given this potential, Mogilev residents are ready to propose a project for the production of fodder additives, organic soils and fertilisers.

Another interesting proposal was voiced at the business forum "Mogilev region and the city of Tianjin: 5 years of co-operation". The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) will assist the enterprises of the parties in organising interregional trade in industrial and agricultural goods. "To this end, it is planned to use the relevant elements of the electronic ecosystem of the BUTB, which will allow Belarusian and Chinese companies, taking into account the specifics of their sales and procurement policies, to conclude transactions either in the course of classical in-session trading or to use the exchange's B2B platform operating on the principle of a marketplace with an integrated exchange mechanism"<sup>103</sup>. Based on the profile of Chinese partners, priority will be given to the export of Belarusian meat and dairy products and vegetable oils to Tianjin and, in the future, to other cities the Bohai Economic Zone. The Belarusian market will be supplied with polymer packaging materials, diesel generators, industrial paints, sheet metal, veterinary drugs and other products in demand in the industrial and agricultural sectors of the country. To all appearances, co-operation in these areas will be very fruitful.

Another of the main regions of Belarus in terms of developing co-operation with China, both in the economic and social spheres, is **Gomel Region**. Suffice it to say that over the past five years, the trade turnover of this south-eastern Belarusian region with China has almost quadrupled. "The basis of exports to the Celestial Empire is wood pulp, timber, meat, dairy and confectionery products. Transport, educational and tourist services are developing. According to the results of the past [2023] year, 44 enterprises of Gomel region supplied their products to China"<sup>104</sup>. In the future there are good prospects for cooperation in industrial production, transport and logistics, agriculture. For example, twenty enterprises of Gomel region have already been accredited to supply food products to the Chinese market, "including 9 milk processing, 7 meat processing enterprises and 4 food processing enterprises"<sup>105</sup>. And

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<sup>102</sup> "To find ways of interaction". Tianjin City Week takes place in Mogilev [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/najti-puti-vzaimodejstviia-v-mogileve-prohodit-nedelja-goroda-tianszin-643563-2024/>

<sup>103</sup> BUTB will help to simplify trade between Mogilev region and Chinese Tianjin [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/butb-pomozhet-uprostit-torgovlju-mezhdu-mogilevskoi-oblastju-i-kitajskim-tianszinem-643724-2024/>

<sup>104</sup> For five years the trade turnover of the Gomel region with China has grown four times [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/za-pjat-let-tovarooborot-gomelskoj-oblasti-s-kitaem-vyros-v-chetvye-raza-640488-2024/>

<sup>105</sup> 20 enterprises are accredited to supply food products to China  
Gomel region [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

they are ready to increase supplies of beef, meat and edible by-products of poultry, whole-milk products, condensed milk and cream, whey powder.

In addition, Homiel enterprises are ready to supply lumber to China, finished woodworking products. Other areas of co-operation are also opening up. In particular, on complex mineral fertilisers, as well as on other projects for possible joint implementation. Among them are a logistics hub on the basis of Gomel airport, production of plywood furniture and other products on the basis of Gomeldrev, creation of new production facilities on the premises of the free economic zone (FEZ) Gomel-Raton. Moreover, there is an interesting example in the FEZ - production unitary enterprise "Alkopak", which produces medical products and which "for more than 20 years has been co-operating with Chinese manufacturers of equipment, spare parts,

technological tooling. At the moment 80-90% of injection moulding machines are made in China. <...> The number of contacts, orders, purchased equipment is increasing. We have built friendly relations with Chinese manufacturing companies"<sup>106</sup>. So it is time for the first residents from the Celestial Empire to appear in the FEZ, for whom attractive conditions have already been created.

The south-eastern region of Belarus is actively building relations with Chinese partners in the humanitarian sphere. For example, "more than 500 Chinese students study at universities in Homiel Region. They choose different specialities for themselves here and have already gained a lot"<sup>107</sup>. Gomel State University named after F. Skaryna (GSU) co-operates with 17 Chinese universities. In addition, the Confucius Institute has been established and is successfully functioning at GSU and joint educational programmes are being implemented. In general, 332 students from China are currently studying at Gomel State University. An experimental project has also been implemented - students from China study in English in four specialities"<sup>108</sup>. As for the cooperation of Gomel region with specific partners from the Celestial Empire, at the beginning of 2024 it "signed documents on bilateral cooperation with four Chinese regions - the autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia (2011) and Xinjiang Uygur (2016), Sichuan (2015) and Jiangsu (2016) provinces"<sup>109</sup>, and ten agreements were adopted - at the level of cities.

In June 2024, another new partner of the Belarusian south- eastern region was

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<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/akkreditatsiiu-na-postavki-pischevoi-produktsii-v-kitai-imejut-20-predpriatii-gomelskoi-oblasti-640508-2024/>

<sup>106</sup> Xie Xiaoyun: FEZ "Gomel-Raton" has created attractive conditions for residents [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/se-sjaojun-v-sez-gomel-raton-sozdany-privlekatelnye-usloviia-dlia-rezidentov-640651-2024/>

<sup>107</sup> Trade, education, tourism. Xie Xiaoyun on the potential of cooperation between Gomel region and regions of China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/torgovlja-obrazovanie-turizm-se-sjaojun-o-potentsiale-sotrudnichestva-gomelskoi-oblasti-i-i-regionov-640506-2024/>

<sup>108</sup> Xie Xiaoyun on cooperation between Belarus and China in education: it is an intellectual base for all spheres [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-sjaojun-o-sotrudnichestve-belarusi-i-i-knr-v-obrazovanii-eto-intellektualnaia-baza-dlia-vseh-sfer-640698-2024/>

<sup>109</sup> Zalesky, B. Belarus - China: New Opportunities. Strategic interaction in the era of exemplary partnership relations / Boris Zalesky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 12.

identified - the **province of Hebei**. During the visit of the official delegation of Gomel region to this province, contracts, memoranda and agreements with Chinese partners were signed, including a plan of events and exchanges for 2024-2025 between the region and the province. The Belarusian side, interested in the development of this interaction, outlined three steps towards increasing trade, economic and investment cooperation. "These are deliveries to Hebei of quality food products of Homiel producers, implementation of joint industrial projects with the preferences of the free economic zone "Homel-Raton", as well as joint investment projects in agriculture"<sup>110</sup>. In turn, the Chinese region is interested to cooperate in machine building, logistics, supply of raw materials of traditional Chinese medicine, as well as to purchase Homiel agricultural products, chemical fertilisers, goods of meat and dairy industry.

Within the framework of the Langfang International Trade and Economic Fair, which was held in Hebei Province in these June days, a number of enterprises of Homiel Region were represented at the Belarusian stand. As a result of meetings and negotiations at this forum in Langfang, domestic exporters - Comintern, Gomel Chemical Plant, Rogachev Milk Canning Plant (MKK) - added to their portfolios of deals. In particular, Rogachev MCC signed a memorandum for product supplies worth about RM1m and an agreement for more than RM7m. Gomel Chemical Plant's memorandum was concluded for nearly RMB 12.5 million and Comintern's deal for RMB 14.7 million."<sup>111</sup>. In addition, the headquarters of Great Wall Haval, a factory producing Haval brand cars, discussed the possibility of assembling these cars on the premises of FEZ Gomel-Raton.

Continuing the theme of participation of Gomel region representatives at exhibitions in the Celestial Empire, we would like to remind that in November 2023 at the 6th China International Import Expo in Shanghai during the Day of Gomel region, documents on export supplies worth \$85 million were signed. In addition, an agreement on cooperation to attract investments between the FEZ "Homiel-Raton" and the Sichuan Association for Promotion of Economic and Trade Cooperation "One Belt - One Road" was adopted at that time, as well as "a document of intent was signed to establish twinning ties between Zhlobin District of Homiel Region and Baotou City of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region"<sup>112</sup>.

All these facts show that the variety of partnership and twinning ties of Minsk, Mogilev and Gomel regions in China is only gaining momentum, developing intensively and fruitfully, emphasising huge prospects for the whole Belarusian-Chinese interregional all-weather strategic partnership.

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<sup>110</sup> Trade, joint industrial projects, agro-industrial complex. Krupko on co-operation between Gomel region and Hebei province [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/torgovlja-sovmestnye-promproekty-apk-krupko-o-sotrudnichestve-gomelskoj-oblasti-i-provintsii-hebei-641393-2024/>

<sup>111</sup> Gomel enterprises signed new contracts and agreements with Chinese partners [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/regions/view/gomelskie-predpriyatija-podpisali-novye-dogovory-i-soglasheniya-s-kitaiskimi-partnerami-641709-2024/>

<sup>112</sup> Documents for \$85 million signed by representatives of the Gomel region at the import exhibition in Shanghai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/dokumenty-na-85-mln-podpisali-predstaviteli-gomelskoj-oblasti-na-vystavke-importa-v-shanhae-598283-2023/>

## Forum of university rectors as a joint

### The Forum of University Rectors as a joint platform for innovative approaches

In November 2023, at the First Forum of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Belarus and the **People's Republic of China** in Minsk, the Agreement on the Establishment of the Sino-Belarusian Association of Universities was signed, which included more than 80 higher education institutions of Belarus and China. At that time there were more than 560 direct university agreements between the two countries. And a plan for the implementation of flagship projects between the universities was being prepared for signing. In July 2023, this plan had 35 positions, and now there are more than 70. They are constantly being added and expanded. This fact suggests that the new association is really a new qualitative level of Belarusian-Chinese relations in education and research. After all, as a result, the parties come "to the creation of joint associations of universities with high-tech enterprises of our countries, on whose orders scientific research, experimental design work and commercialisation of our university scientists for the economy will be carried out"<sup>113</sup>. Speaking in general about humanitarian cooperation between Belarus and China, this association has already become a hallmark in such areas as inter-university cooperation, joint training of specialists, and joint scientific work. Besides, "such an association is of great importance for training even more Chinese and Belarusian scholars who know well the languages of our two countries, who understand Chinese and Belarusian culture"<sup>114</sup> and opens up many opportunities for further development of cooperation between Belarus and China in the sphere of education. Many Belarusian universities that promote joint educational structures with Chinese partners became active participants of the new association. In particular, at that time "seven joint projects were already functioning: three laboratories, two centres and two institutes. 40 joint educational programmes of the first and second levels of higher education are being implemented, 10 of which have been developed over the last two years"<sup>115</sup>. In this context, we should mention three Belarusian universities: Belarusian State University (BSU), Yanka Kupala Grodno State University (YKSU), Brest State Technical University (BrSTU).

Let's start with BSU: as of November 2023, "more than 80 agreements on co-operation with 55 Chinese educational institutions have been signed, 72% of the total number of

<sup>113</sup> Belarus and China signed an agreement on the establishment of the association of universities [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-kitaj-podpisali-soglasenie-o-sozdanii-assotsiatsii-universitetov-600861-2023/>.

<sup>114</sup> Xie Xiaoyun: Chinese-Belarusian association of universities will become a hallmark of humanitarian cooperation between the two countries [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/se-siaojun-kitaisko-belorusskaia-assotsiatsiia-vuzov-stanet-vizitnoi-kartochkoi-gumanitarnogo-600900-2023/>.

<sup>115</sup> Zalessky, B. Hope for the positive future. Dynamics of partnerships under conditions of economic realism / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2023. - C. 103.

foreign students at BSU are Chinese citizens"<sup>116</sup> . Since 2007, Dalian Polytechnic University (DPU) has become a strategic partner of the Belarusian university. The most significant project recently was the opening of joint institutes DPU-BSU and BSU-DPU. In June 2023, the parties considered the prospects of holding mirror summer schools on the basis of the two universities and opening a new speciality "Photonics" on the basis of DPU-BPU in 2024/2025 academic year.

Xi'an University of Foreign Languages became BSU's new partner in China in April 2023. The Memorandum of Understanding considers cooperation "in the field of regional and country studies of the Eurasian continent, history and ethnic issues of the peoples of Central Asia, Russian-Soviet oriental studies"<sup>117</sup> . The Chinese university began operating in 1952 as the Northwest College of Russian Language, which was one of the first to teach foreign languages. Now it consists of 23 faculties and educational institutes, where about 20,000 undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students from 37 countries study and where 20 foreign languages, including Belarusian, are taught.

In November 2023, BSU signed two more new documents with Chinese partners. First, it is a memorandum of understanding with the Sichuan University of Foreign Languages, which envisages prospects for cooperation in regional studies, linguistics, and Belarusian studies. After all, the Centre for Belarusian Studies has been operating in this Chinese university since 2019. Secondly, there is an agreement on exchange of students with the Chinese University of Political Science and Law, which develops "partnership within the framework of the memorandum of understanding between the universities, which has been in force since March 2023, and concerns the training of graduates of the Chinese university in legal specialties in the master's degree programme of BSU, provision of grant support for the implementation of academic mobility programmes"<sup>118</sup> . At the same time, the issue of the Chinese university joining the activities of the Centre for Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Studies, established by BSU together with Qingdao University, was also considered.

Interaction with China in the field of education is one of the strategic directions of international cooperation of another Belarusian university - GrSU, which signed its first agreement with Chinese partners back in 2001 - with the South Central University of Economics and Law. Today the Grodno university has 14 partners from different provinces of China. The cooperation is carried out in a wide range of areas: joint educational programmes, academic exchanges, joint scientific projects. In October

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<sup>116</sup> "Photonics and summer schools. BSU and Dalian Polytechnic University develop co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/fotomka-i-letnie-shkolv-bgu-i-dalianskii-politehnicheskii-universitet-razvivaiut-sotrudnichestvo-571808-2023/>

<sup>117</sup> BSU and Xi'an University of Foreign Languages signed a memorandum of understanding [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-i-sianskij-universitet-inostrannyh-jazykov-podpisali-memorandum-o-vzaimoponimanii-563650-2023/>

<sup>118</sup> BSU expands partnerships with China, two new agreements signed [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/bgu-rasshirjaet-partnerskie-svjazi-s-kitaem-podpisany-dva-novyh-soglashenija-598631-2023/>

2023 GrSU signed an agreement on international cooperation with Shijiazhuang Engineering Professional College, which implies long-term cooperation in the field of introduction of scientific developments in the educational process, development of scientific potential and ensuring high quality of professional training of specialists in the field of academic mobility, development of training in the network form. It only remains to add that for five years more than 500 Chinese citizens have received bachelor's and master's degrees at GrSU, and two postgraduate students from China have successfully defended their PhD theses. Today there are more than 100 students from China studying at Yanka Kupala Grodno State University"<sup>119</sup>. Also, GrSU is the first of the Belarusian regional universities, where Chinese language courses with a three-year training programme were started. And in five years, more than 600 people have been trained.

As for Brest State Technical University, in November 2023, it signed a co-operation agreement with Anhui Wenda Institute of Information Engineering. This university, located in the Chinese city of Hefei, became the 15th Chinese educational institution to sign a co-operation document with BrSTU. The partners have outlined initial priorities for profitable interaction. In particular, graduates of the Chinese institute will be able to continue their studies at the master's programme of Brest University. In addition, Belarusian and Chinese teachers will conduct joint scientific research and develop teaching materials. A more distant prospect is the creation of joint educational programmes. It should be reminded that BrSTU has already signed 170 cooperation agreements with universities of 35 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Chinese vector of co-operation is one of the priorities. For example, "for more than 15 years joint training of specialists in the field of motorway construction, accounting and automation has been carried out with Huh-Khoto Vocational Institute. Last year, a pilot training programme for mechanical engineers with Xinxiang University was launched"<sup>120</sup>. And Hebei Institute of International Business and Economics plans to create a joint programme of training students in the field of e-business with BrSTU. In addition, Brest university has taken up scientific work in the field of information technologies, which is financed by the Belarusian Republican Fund for Fundamental Research and the National Natural Science Foundation of the People's Republic of China. All these facts have shown that the establishment of the China-Belarus Association of Universities has become an important stage in the development of inter-university co-operation, and also serves for the benefit of the economies of the two countries and the development of the two peoples - Belarus and China.

In June 2024, Minsk hosted the second Forum of Rectors of Higher Education

<sup>119</sup> SDSU and Shijiazhuang Engineering College agreed on cooperation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/grgu-i-shitszjaczhuanskij-inzhenernyj-kolledzh-dogovorilis-o-sotrudnichestve-595101-2023/>

<sup>120</sup> Brest Technical University will co-operate with the Institute of Anhui Province of China [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/regions/view/brestskij-tehnicheskij-universitet-budet-sotrudnichat-s-institutom-kitajskoi-provintsii-anhoi-602188-2023>



Institutions of Belarus and China, which was attended by more than 40 heads of universities of the two countries, 18 of whom were rectors of Chinese universities. They discussed the prospects of inter-university co-operation, first of all, inter-university ties. This includes not only training of personnel in innovative specialities, but also a wide range of scientific and technical cooperation and youth exchanges.

For reference, we would like to point out that there are currently more than 700 bilateral agreements between the universities of Belarus and China. More than 200 of them were signed in the last two years alone. Currently, "40 joint educational programmes of higher education are being implemented, 12 of which have been launched in the current academic year. Another 20 joint educational programmes are under development, including training of personnel of higher scientific qualification"<sup>121</sup>. Also, 13 joint educational and scientific structures - six laboratories, five biological centres and two institutes - are already functioning on the basis of higher education institutions of the two countries.

Speaking about the Second Forum of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of Belarus and China, it should be noted that the discussion of topical issues in the field of conducting promising scientific research and introducing innovative teaching methods to train competitive and professional specialists in the current globalisation environment took place within the framework of two sections - "Innovative Models of Cooperation between Universities of China and Belarus" and "Sino-Belarusian Cooperation in Basic Sciences". Eight documents were also signed at the forum, which "provide for assistance in organizing the exchange of scientific information and students, work on joint educational and research projects, as well as informing about study programmes, holding scientific and educational events..."<sup>122</sup>. These include: agreements on academic and scientific cooperation between the Belarusian State Medical University and Peking University, on cooperation between Minsk State Linguistic University and Shanghai Foreign Languages University; memoranda of understanding between - the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics and Chongqing Polytechnic University, the Belarusian State Technological University and Liaoning University, the Belarusian State University of Technology and Liaoning University, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics and Shanghai Foreign Languages University, the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, the Belarusian State University of Science and Technology and the Belarusian State University of Technology.

New opportunities for co-operation have also been reached between the Belarusian State University (BSU) and Peking University (PKU). By the way, this Chinese

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<sup>121</sup> International Innovation Youth Forum will be held in Minsk in 2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/mezhdunarodnyj-innovatsionnyj-molodezhnyj-forum-proj-det-v-minske-v-2025-godu-643825-2024/>.

<sup>122</sup> Eight documents on co-operation between higher education institutions of Belarus and China signed at the Rectors' Forum [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/vosem-dokumentov-o-sotrudnichestve-mezhdu-vuzami-belarusi-i-kitaja-podpisano-na-forume-rektorov-643857-2024/>



university was founded in 1898 and is a leader among universities in the Celestial Empire. It ranks 12th in the world according to the international QS rating. "The structure of PKU includes faculties - Natural Sciences, Information and Engineering, Humanities, Social Sciences, Economics and Management, as well as the Centre for Medical Sciences, Interdisciplinary Units and Shenzhen Graduate School"<sup>123</sup>. A memorandum of understanding was signed between BSU and PKU in 2019 and a cooperation agreement on a joint education programme was signed in May 2022.

As for BSU, it is already implementing 112 contracts and agreements with 73 Chinese partners - universities and research centres. More than three and a half thousand students, undergraduates and postgraduates from China are currently studying at BSU. This is about 70 per cent of all BSU foreigners. Over the last year and a half, the Belarusian university has done a lot in terms of strengthening partnership ties with this country. There are several interesting examples. First, in 2023, the BSU Faculty of International Relations opened the Research Centre of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation - a platform for research in the field of international activities, history, law, trade, economics, culture. Secondly, in November last year within the framework of the first International Congress on Scientific and Technical Exchanges "One Belt, One Road" BSU became one of the founders of the new University Network of Scientific and Research Cooperation (iUNRC). Thirdly, a joint training programme in biotechnology is being successfully implemented with PKU.

Fourthly, in March 2024, BSU signed an agreement with the Hainan Centre of Excellence in International Education on the implementation of the Belarusian-Chinese project "Institute of Innovative Education" under auspices of BSU in the city of Sanya. There on its basis it is planned to train citizens of the countries close to China and states-participants of the project "One Belt, One Road". "This is a kind of ecosystem that involves not only the education of students and training of specialists, but also the development of business initiatives within the framework of Belarusian-Chinese economic and industrial relations through the creation of high-tech products"<sup>124</sup>. This initiative has already been supported by 14 leading universities in China. The new project will be developed in several areas: development of educational and methodological documentation, preparation of Chinese citizens for admission to BSU, career guidance activities, organisation of joint teaching of Russian as a foreign language and English using information and communication technologies. At the same time in Sanya BSU signed a memorandum of international co-operation with Sanya Yazhou Bei Scientific and Technical City of Development and Construction Ltd. This agreement was one of the first in the implementation of the project "Institute of Innovative Education" under the auspices of BSU and involves scientific and

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<sup>123</sup> Inter-university holiday established in Belarusian and Chinese universities [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/mezhuniversitetskii-prazdnik-uchrezhden-v-belorusskom-i-kitai-skom-vuzah-643681-2024/>

<sup>124</sup> Innovations, high-tech co-operation and export of services. BSU on new projects with China [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/society/view/innovatsii-vysokotekhnologichnoe-sotrudnichestvo-i-eksport-uslug-bgu-onovv-proektah-s-kitaem-622125-2024/>

scientific-technical interaction between the parties in modern areas, including space. Fifthly, in March this year BSU expanded its cooperation with China in the field of language training of students by signing two agreements with the Second Beijing Institute of Foreign Languages. The first one regulates the opening of joint educational programmes, implementation of joint research and educational projects, exchange of information, teaching materials, organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops, courses and preparation of joint publications. The second agreement provides for academic exchange of undergraduate, master's and postgraduate students. It is clear that these agreements will contribute to the development of partnerships in education and science, deepening and expanding existing co-operation. Especially since the Second Beijing Foreign Studies University has a vast potential for international co-operation. Suffice it to say that this university offers 14 faculties with 48 undergraduate specialties. There is also a master's programme, postgraduate studies and 15 scientific institutes"<sup>125</sup>. So BSU approached the 2nd Forum of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of Belarus and China in full readiness to develop new multi-format ties with Chinese partners.

And already at this forum BSU and PKU established a joint initiative - "Days of Friendship and Unity", which will be celebrated annually on 25 and 26 June and "will be a demonstration of effective and reliable cooperation in various vectors, including the involvement of students and teachers in various scientific, educational, cultural exchange processes"<sup>126</sup>. One of the central events of these "Days" will be the International Innovation Youth Forum, which will be held in 2025. Also within the framework of this forum, the universities of Belarus and China put forward an initiative to establish the Belarusian-Chinese Centre for Fundamental Research, which is a fundamentally new step in scientific cooperation, as it is fundamental research in the field of transformation of production that will allow Belarus and China to reach a qualitatively new level.

Summarising the results of this forum, it should be noted that the new stage of technological innovation development, based on the in-depth development of industrial transformation, development and technology of artificial intelligence, requires the implementation of specific measures to strengthen scientific and technological cooperation between Belarus and China. In this respect, the Rectors' Forum of the two countries is becoming an effective platform for multilateral and bilateral interaction in order to direct efforts towards further development of joint Belarusian-Chinese platforms for the creation of innovative developments, search for new opportunities to increase the efficiency of educational and scientific-technical approaches.

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<sup>125</sup> BSU will expand cooperation with China in language training of students [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/bgu-rasshirit-sotrudnichestvo-s-kitaem-s-kitaem-v-jazykovej-podgotovke-studentov-622894-2024/>

<sup>126</sup> Forum of Rectors of Leading Universities of Belarus and China has started its work in Minsk [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/society/view/rukovoditelej-bolee-40-vuzov-belarusi-i-i-kitaia-obiedinil-forum-rektorov-veduschih-universitetov-643761-2024/>

## Potential for sustainable growth partnerships

**Pakistan** is one of Belarus's most important partners in Asia, which fits into Belarus's strategy of diversifying exports and developing interaction with the countries of the far arc. Pakistan is a friendly state that has a good industrial potential and market. The population of this country is over 200 million people. Pakistan has a well-developed agriculture, which makes it possible to organise cooperation in the supply of engineering and processing products.

In 2024, Belarus and Pakistan celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Over the years, this multilateral partnership has shown that the Belarusian side is keen to develop relations of full-fledged strategic partnership, thanks to numerous initiatives and co-operation between Minsk and Islamabad. Suffice it to say that to date, the two sides have already adopted about 90 bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding in such areas as trade, agriculture, science and technology, and education. The interaction between Belarus and Pakistan has been developing particularly intensively in the last ten years, when the two countries adopted major bilateral documents - the Islamabad Declaration on Pakistan-Belarus Partnership (29 May 2015), the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Belarus (10 August 2015), the Joint Statement of the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the President of the Republic of Belarus (5 October 2016).

As for the Belarusian-Pakistani trade and economic relations, "over the past few years, the volume of trade between the Republic of Belarus and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has fluctuated between \$50 million and \$65 million"<sup>127</sup>. But already in 2021 the trade turnover between them increased by more than 77 per cent and exceeded \$92 million with a surplus of \$63.6 million for the Belarusian side. Belarusian exports were based on "tractors and spare parts, potash fertilisers, specific goods, synthetic yarns, cellulose, dairy products, medicines, diesel engines"<sup>128</sup>.

In the coming years, Minsk and Islamabad intend to make the necessary efforts to bring their partnership to an even more qualitatively new level. As for the Belarusian side, it intends to promote its goods and services in the Pakistani market in two ways. The first one is to increase trade in traditional goods - automotive, quarry and construction equipment, as well as construction machinery and equipment. machinery, products instrumentation, wood processing, meat and dairy, chemical, pharmaceutical and pulp and paper industries. The second way is to supply new commodity items - metal products, flax

<sup>127</sup> Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://pakistan.mfa.gov.by/ru/trade-and-economic-bilateral-relations/>

<sup>128</sup> Ambassador of Pakistan: agriculture and industry are our key points of interest in Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/posol-pakistana-selskoe-hozjajstvo-i-promyshlennost-nashi-kljuchevyeto-chki-interesa-v-belarusi-494952-2022/>

fibre and yarn, as well as "including consumer goods, such as soft cheeses, perfumes and cosmetics, household appliances, children's goods and watches"<sup>129</sup>.

We would like to add that over the past nine years, the two sides have already held seven meetings of the joint Belarusian-Pakistani commission for trade and economic cooperation. And in general, there are already "many mechanisms of bilateral contacts between the two states, including joint working groups (JWGs) on co-operation in industry, agriculture, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, as well as science and technology"<sup>130</sup>. In addition, Minsk and Islamabad maintain close interaction between the business communities in the form of joint platforms, including the Business Council, Business and Investment, Textile and Agricultural Forums.

Speaking about trade and economic cooperation, we would like to emphasise that the economies of Belarus and Pakistan are mutually complementary. For example, in 2023, "the main items of Belarusian exports to Pakistan are tractors, potash fertilizers, synthetic fibres, tyres, synthetic thread harnesses, baby food (dry mixes)"<sup>131</sup>. As for Pakistani supplies to Belarus, they are rice, food products, leather goods, fabrics, and sports equipment.

In January 2023, Minsk hosted the sixth meeting of the joint Belarusian-Pakistani commission on trade and economic cooperation, where the parties proposed to intensify bilateral interaction, both in terms of increasing trade turnover and investment cooperation, as "the two countries have good prospects for transition from simple trade to industrial cooperation, creation of joint productions in areas of mutual interest"<sup>132</sup>. In particular, the two countries reached an agreement to expand co-operation in a number of areas - machine-building, agriculture, science, education, health care. Thus, Belarus is interested in increasing supplies of industrial products to this South Asian country - Belarusian passenger, municipal, agricultural, quarry machinery, textile products. "Partnership in agriculture is among the priorities. This is not only the readiness to expand supplies of Belarusian food products, but also products for livestock breeding: mixed fodder, protein supplements, veterinary drugs. The establishment of a permanent exhibition centre of Belarus in Pakistan will help promote agro-industrial products more actively..."<sup>133</sup>. Another mutually beneficial area is pharmaceuticals, as Belarus is interested in exporting medicines to Pakistan and

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<sup>129</sup> National Marketing Centre on the peculiarities of promotion of Belarusian goods on the market of Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/comments/view/natsionalnyi-tsentr-marketinga-ob-osobennostyah-prodvizheniya-belorusskikh-tovarov-na-rynok-pakistan-8188/>

<sup>130</sup> Khan, S.H. Diversity of Pakistan / S.H. Khan // [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://belta.by/interview/view/mnogoobrazie-pakistan-posol-o-nezavisimosti-i-sotrudnichestve-islamabada-s-minskom-8853/>

<sup>131</sup> Belarus and Pakistan celebrate the 30th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/belarus-i-pakistan-otmechajut-30-letie-613420-2024/>

<sup>132</sup> Belarus is interested in supplying Pakistan with agro-industrial complex products and agricultural machinery [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-zainteresovana-v-postavkah-v-pakistan-produktsii-apk-i-selhoztekhniki-544338-2023>

<sup>133</sup> Belarus and Pakistan agreed to expand co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-pakistan-dogovorilis-o-rasshirenii-sotrudnichestva-544373-2023>

is already ready to consider the possibility of setting up joint pharmaceutical production facilities.

At the 6th meeting of the joint commission, the parties specifically also discussed opportunities for co-operation in the field of science and high technologies. These include nano- and biotechnologies, laser optoelectronics, information and communication technologies, aerospace and geoinformation systems. In this regard, in March 2023, a national exposition of Belarus at the International Trade and Industry Fair was organised in the Pakistani city of Karachi.

Recall that at a similar exhibition in November 2021 in Karachi, the collective stand of the State Committee for Science and Technology "presented about 60 scientific, technical and innovative developments. Institutions of the Ministry of Education, as well as organisations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus showed their exhibits in the field of surface treatment and modification, chemical technologies and materials, physical materials science and new materials"<sup>134</sup>.

Finally, regional cooperation is gradually becoming another promising area of Belarusian-Pakistani partnership. A number of agreements and memoranda between cities, provinces, and regions of the two countries have already been signed. For example, of the Belarusian regions, Hrodna Region has a great potential for co-operation with Pakistan. "The province of Sindh and the city of Karachi, which is the industrial centre of Pakistan, are very important strategic partners. A co-operation agreement was signed between the city of Karachi and Grodno region in 2015"<sup>135</sup>. And the parties are now ready to renew the agreement and resume relations in all sectors: economy, business, culture, education. For example, baby food produced by Bellakt has already proved itself in Pakistan, and these supplies can be increased. And during the existence of Grodno Medical University 122 Pakistani students have already received education here. So the parties will actively continue their work to develop points of contact. After all, this is only the beginning.

Another interesting idea concerning Belarusian-Pakistani regional interaction is that nine special economic zones are planned to be built in Pakistan in the near future, four of which are in a high degree of readiness. All of them are located in the Pakistan-China economic corridor and can be used for the implementation of joint Pakistan-Belarus projects. Thus, it can be predicted that partnership ties between the regions of Belarus and Pakistan may soon turn into new promising projects.

And in 2024, the two sides are already discussing a new roadmap for Belarus-Pakistan cooperation for 2025-2027, which will provide a comprehensive framework for strengthening bilateral ties and which focuses on providing "trade and investment facilitation, promoting joint research and development, and enhancing educational and

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<sup>134</sup> Zalesky, B.L. To promote domestic technologies / B.L. Zalesky // Materiały XX Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji "Kluczowe aspekty naukowej działalności - 2023", Volume I. Przemysł: Nauka i studia. - C. 24.

<sup>135</sup> Ambassador: Hrodna region has a huge potential for cooperation with Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2022. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/regions/view/posol-grodnenskaia-oblast-imeet-ogromnyi-potentsial-dlia-sotrudnichestva-s-pakistanom-515738-2022>

cultural exchanges. The roadmap emphasises the importance of cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, e-commerce, science and technology, and education"<sup>136</sup> .

Among the planned activities of the new roadmap, emphasis will be placed, among other things, on the development of industrial co-operation between the two countries with a view to its further intensification. In this context, we would like to remind that the interaction with the Pakistani side in this area is being developed within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed in 2015 between the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Belarus and the Ministry of Industry and Production of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. And now "based on the results of January-June 2024, there is a positive dynamics of trade turnover of the enterprises of the Ministry of Industry [of Belarus] with Pakistan. The growth rate of exports to this region exceeded 180 per cent compared to the same period last year"<sup>137</sup> . Belarusian exporters are ready to continue supplying a wide range of machinery - agricultural, cargo, municipal and road vehicles.

For example, the Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) plans to increase sales of its machines to the Pakistani market. Recall that "the average annual volume of sales to Pakistan is about 2-2.5 thousand tractors"<sup>138</sup> . But recently, the tractor manufacturers, in agreement with partners from Pakistan, have begun to modernise the technical part exclusively according to the requirements of the end user. For this purpose back in August this year MTW signed agreements on strategic cooperation with Pakistani companies Shahzad Trade Link and HBL Zarai Services, which secured "agreements on organisation of promotion, sales and service of BELARUS tractors with power over 100 horsepower on the Pakistani market"<sup>139</sup> . They will also create platforms for demonstration of Belarusian tractors and mobile service of agricultural machinery in various provinces of Pakistan through the existing dealer network with the involvement of new companies. In addition, MTW is working on the issue of setting up an assembly plant in this South Asian country, as "joint and assembly plants are a global trend. Local legislative acts are being developed for this, which stimulate this process"<sup>140</sup> . And in the near future, to all appearances, the parties, having fulfilled the relevant formal procedures, will come to a final decision on this issue.

As for other topical aspects of Belarusian-Pakistani interaction, it can be noted that

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<sup>136</sup> Khan, S.H. The rapprochement of Minsk and Islamabad / S.H. Khan // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/interview/view/sblizhenie-minska-i-islamabada-sadzhad-haider-han-rasskazal-o-novyh-initsiativah-i-vizitah-9357/>

<sup>137</sup> The Ministry of Industry is ready to provide all possible assistance in the development of co-operation between Belarus and Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/minprom-gotov-okazat-vsemernoe-sodeistvie-v-razvitii-sotrudnichestva-belarusi-i-pakistan-655788-2024/>.

<sup>138</sup> Minsk Tractor Plant plans to increase the volume of machinery deliveries to Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/minskii-traktormi-zavod-planiruet-narastit-obiemyi-postavok-tehniki-v-pakistan-655685-2024/>.

<sup>139</sup> MTZ signed agreements on strategic co-operation with companies from Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mtz-podpisal-soglasheniya-o-strategicheskoi-sotrudnichestvo-s-kompanijami-iz-pakistan-653533-2024/>.

<sup>140</sup> MTZ is working out the issue of creating an assembly plant in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mtz-prorabatyvaet-vopros-sozdaniya-sborochnogo-proizvodstva-v-pakistane-655686-2024/>.



scientists of the two countries also plan to develop cooperation in priority areas. In August 2024, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Academy of Sciences of Pakistan stated the need to update the agreement on scientific and technical cooperation, which was signed in May 2015, to include the most relevant and priority areas for both countries. Especially since "Pakistan is interested in developing co-operation with scientists from Belarus in such areas as artificial intelligence, laser technologies and technologies for agriculture"<sup>141</sup>. The aim of these changes is the same: to present concrete results of joint innovation activities of representatives of the scientific and technological sphere of Belarus and Pakistan in the near future.

At the 7th meeting of the Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation in September this year held in Islamabad, the two sides reaffirmed their intentions to develop and intensify cooperation in various areas of the economy. The areas in question were industry, agriculture, education, pharmaceuticals, trade and investment as well as transport and communications. "A memorandum on co-operation in the field of textile industry was signed. At the intergovernmental level, the foundation has been laid for cooperation in a number of areas - standardisation, environmental protection, light industry, transport and communications, disaster management. The relevant bilateral documents will be signed in the near future"<sup>142</sup>.

Another area that will be continued in the partnership between Belarus and Pakistan is exhibition activities. We have already mentioned above that in March 2023, the national exposition of Belarus at the International Trade and Industry Fair was organised in the Pakistani city of Karachi. More than 350 companies from different countries of the world and more than 50 thousand visitors take part in this exhibition specialised forum in South Asia every year. The main sections of the exhibition are agriculture, automotive industry, machine-tool construction, power engineering, metallurgical and mining industry, construction, petrochemicals. The National exposition of Belarus was organised at this exhibition, where "20 Belarusian companies took part, which produce industrial, petrochemical, diagnostic goods, materials and equipment, as well as provide educational services, research and development works"<sup>143</sup>.

In particular, almost forty developments of Belarusian scientists from seven scientific and research and production organisations of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus and institutions of the Ministry of Education were presented. "Among the most interesting ones are electronic ceramics and products based on it

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<sup>141</sup> Academies of Sciences of Belarus and Pakistan will co-operate in the spheres of technologies for agro-industrial complex, lasers and AI [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/akademii-nauk-belarusi-i-pakistana-budut-sotrudnicat-v-sferah-tehnologii-dlja-apk-lazerov-i-ii-655196-2024/>

<sup>142</sup> Education, Pharmaceuticals, Industry. Belarus and Pakistan have outlined spheres of co-operation [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/obrazovanie-farmatsevtika-promyshlennost-belarusi-i-pakistan-nametili-sfery-vzaimodeistviia-663606-2024/>

<sup>143</sup> The national exposition of Belarus opened at the industrial exhibition in Pakistan's Karachi [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/natsionalnaja-ekspozitsija-belarusi-otkrylas-na-promyshlennoj-vystavke-v-pakistanskom-karachi-554860-2023/>



from the Materials Science Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, including ceramic insulators and housings for microwave filters, dielectric resonators, resonators for antennas, and products based on piezoceramics"<sup>144</sup>. In addition, the Materials Research Centre presented graphene-containing material and products based on it. It can be used in structural elements, energy storages, lubricants, sorbents, sensors.

The Institute of Meat and Dairy Industry of the National Academy of Sciences presented dry starter and bioconservative at the exhibition. Bacterial starters for balancing feed additives regulate microbiological processes in cows' stomachs. The biopreservative consists of a mixture of specially selected and lyophilically dried strains of lactic acid bacteria - lactococci. It is intended for silage of plant raw materials - annual and perennial cereals and legumes.

Micro- and nanotechnologies of superfine magnetic abrasive polishing of the Belarusian National Technical University (BITU) were also presented at the exhibition. Their purpose is ultrathin polishing of high-precision surfaces to nano-level roughness, correction of the surface shape of optical parts, increasing the radial strength of parts of optical and laser devices, cleaning of surfaces before welding and coating, increasing the resistance to corrosion, wear and mechanical destruction of parts made of metal alloys, single crystals and ceramics. The developments surpass the best world analogues in terms of technological capabilities, economic and environmental indicators. The technologies and equipment are of interest to machine and instrument-making enterprises, including manufacturers of optics, lasers and electronics.

The Belarusian State University (BSU) was among the active participants of this exposition and presented about 20 developments. BSU innovations included "radio-absorbing materials of the KUP series. They are designed to protect aircraft from electromagnetic radiation. In particular, the materials can be used to cover the inner niche of weather radar in civil aircraft, as an absorber in the development of compact anechoic chambers, coordinated loads..."<sup>145</sup>. Also among the developments of BSU - "Technology of synthesis of new polyols from secondary and natural raw materials for production of polyurethane foams", which is based on the processing and use of secondary raw materials for the production of polyols. They provide reduction of production cost of a tonne of polyurethane foam by five to ten per cent by reducing the cost of polyol by 15-20 per cent. In addition, BSU presented liquid crystal materials, a multichannel spectrometer, a mobile power supply for charging supercapacitors and batteries of electric transport, a recorder of movement parameters of lift equipment B-590 PALTUS, light-absorbing composite materials.

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<sup>144</sup> Belarus will present scientific, technical and innovative developments at the International Trade and Industry Fair in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://edu.gov.by/vi-ru/news/belarus-predstavit-nauchnotekhnicheskie-i-innovatsionnye-razrabotki-na-mezhdunarodnoy-vystavke-inter/>

<sup>145</sup> About 20 developments will be presented by BSU at the International Trade and Industry Fair exhibition [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://bsu.by/news/okolo-20-razrabotok-predstavit-bgu-na-mezhdunarodnoy-vystavke-international-trade-and-industry-fair-d/>

And the Belarusian State Technological University (BSTU) presented "heat-resistant ceramic materials for thermal units. They are designed for thermal and electrical insulation of furnaces in foundries, thermal and forging shops"<sup>146</sup>. These materials have a number of advantages over their analogues. They have improved mechanical, thermal and electrophysical properties. In addition, BSTU showed glass-ceramic proppants - granule-shaped materials used in the oil industry to improve the efficiency of well recovery using hydraulic fracturing technology.

It should be noted that the Belarusian-Pakistani business forum was held on the margins of the International Trade and Industrial Fair-2023, during which Belarusian participants presented their products to the Pakistani audience. Negotiations were also held to sign contracts for the supply of Belarusian goods and services to Pakistan.

And one more interesting fact: at the end of October 2024 in the same Pakistani city of Karachi, the fifth International Textile and Leather Exhibition TEXPO-2024 will be held to showcase textile and leather products made of environmentally friendly materials, where "more than 300 local manufacturers will present their textile and leather products, and about 50 exhibitors from around the world will present the latest technological advances and environmentally friendly products. Pakistan's largest companies, which supply textiles and leather to world-renowned brands, are also participating"<sup>147</sup>.

The Pakistani side invited Belarusian companies interested in establishing contacts with top local manufacturers to take part in the event and will facilitate visits to Pakistani textile and leather industries.

All this suggests that this South Asian country is an important trade partner for Belarus, where the basis of Belarusian exports is complex technical, chemical, and food products with high added value: tractors, trucks, parts and accessories, tyres, chemical fibres, and pulp. Overall, the two countries have good potential for further sustainable growth and continue to work hard to maintain the active dynamics of bilateral interaction in order to make fuller use of the available opportunities for co-operation.

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<sup>146</sup> Belarus will present developments in the field of electronic ceramics and nanotechnologies [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://e-cis.info/news/569/107455/>

<sup>147</sup> Ecologically clean textiles and leather. Belarusian companies were invited to the profile exhibition in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/ekologicheski-chistyj-tekstil-i-kozha-na-profilnuu-vystavku-v-pakistane-priglasili-belorusskie-656923-2024/>

## Towards regional economic integration economic integration

The year 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Belarus and **Pakistan**. During this time, the interaction between official Minsk and Islamabad has developed into a solid large-scale partnership. This is evidenced by the **roadmap for the development of comprehensive cooperation between the countries for 2025-2027** signed in November last year, which will facilitate bilateral interaction. During the visit of the Belarusian leader to Pakistan, along with the roadmap, a dozen and a half agreements and memorandums were adopted, covering trade relations, economy, cultural cooperation, education, and defence. Overall, the legal framework of the Belarusian-Pakistani relations already totals about 100 documents,

The parties intend to develop **production cooperation** as one of the priority areas. In particular, the Belarusian side plans to organise two assembly plants for tractors on Pakistani soil. "It will be a range of tractors up to 60 hp and over 100 hp, which are in high demand in the Pakistani market,"<sup>148</sup>. Note that in 2025, Minsk Tractor Plant (MTZ) will supply at least 2.7 thousand machines up to 60 horsepower. And "the growth rate of exports of BELARUS tractors for the first nine months of 2024 was 107.9% compared to the same period last year [2023]"<sup>149</sup>. In addition, in November, MTZ signed a memorandum of co-operation with Pakistani companies Green Corporate Initiative Limited and Heavy Industries Taxila, which defines specific terms and an algorithm of actions for the implementation of the project of assembly production of more powerful Belarusian machines. After all, "tractors over 100 hp have not been supplied to Pakistan on a permanent basis before. And the organisation of assembly production has long-term mutually beneficial prospects"<sup>150</sup>.

Pakistani partners have also been offered to organise a joint venture for the production of trailed and mounted agricultural machines, which together will allow to perform the whole range of technological works. And there are serious plans to supply trucks, quarry and road-building machinery, and municipal machines. In Islamabad, agreement was signed to start assembly production of Belarusian engines for tractor assembly plants and supply to the secondary market of Pakistan. Pakistani partners are also very interested in passenger vehicles, especially in Belarusian electric buses. This country plans to eventually replace passenger transport with internal combustion engines with environmentally friendly transport. So, in this part, it is possible to offer not only electric passenger vehicles, but also a Belarusian network of charging

<sup>148</sup> Not only tractors. What assembly plants of Belarus may appear in Pakistan? [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/ne-tolko- traktorv-kakie-sborochnye-proizvodstva-belarusi-mogut-pojavitsja-v-pakistane-678297-2024/>.

<sup>149</sup> MTZ will supply Pakistan with at least 2.7 thousand BELARUS tractors in 2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mtz-postavit-v- pakistan-ne-menee-27-tys-traktorov-belarus-v-2025-godu-679583-2024/>.

<sup>150</sup> Assembly production of BELARUS tractors is planned to be organised in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/sborochnoe- proizvodstvo-traktorov-belarus-planiruetsja-organizovat-v-pakistane-678120-2024/>.

infrastructure organised according to the "smart city" principle.

In terms of **transport cooperation**, Belarus and Pakistan are working on the organisation of the so-called seamless cargo logistics. It is known that cargo deliveries from our republic to this South Asian country are quite complicated. And "now the parties are working so that the enterprises could reduce their costs of supplying goods to Pakistan and from Pakistan to Belarus"<sup>151</sup>. In November last year in Islamabad, an intergovernmental agreement on international road transport was signed, which defines the procedure for transport operations. It is planned that the two countries will actually halve the period of cargo delivery. The calculation is this. "Yes, road transport is more expensive than sea transport, but at the same time it moves at a much higher speed, i.e. actually half as fast as sea transport. In the future, Belarus and Pakistan would also like to establish a railway connection: in this case logistics will become more favourable"<sup>152</sup>.

Returning to the Belarusian-Pakistani documents signed in November 2024, there are two more important agreements: on scientific and technical cooperation - between the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Belarus and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences; on cooperation in science and technology - between the NAS and the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. And already in January 2025, a competition of joint Belarusian-Pakistani scientific and technological projects for 2025-2027 was announced, which "will be held in the following areas: new materials, nano- and biotechnologies, renewable energy sources, industrial chemistry, mining, smart agriculture and precision farming, information and communication technologies, medicine and pharmaceuticals, food security, water management, environmental protection"<sup>153</sup>. This will be a concrete step towards deepening Belarus' ties with Pakistan in science and technology.

Another topic related to the visit of the Belarusian delegation to Islamabad in November 2024 **was the business forum between Belarus and Pakistan**, which was attended by over 40 representatives of domestic enterprises representing such areas of cooperation as machine building, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, veterinary drugs, and light industry. An interesting fact was noted at this forum. In 2023, Belarusian exports to Pakistan increased two and a half times. In the first half of 2024, it is plus 13 per cent or over \$17 million. "The total trade turnover between the countries in 2023 amounted to almost \$50 million"<sup>154</sup>. And here is the result of this forum: eight

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<sup>151</sup> Belarus and Pakistan are working on the creation of "seamless" freight logistics [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-pakistan- rabotajut-nad-sozdaniem-besshovnoj-gruzovoj-logistiki-677983-2024/>

<sup>152</sup> Belarus and Pakistan will halve the time of cargo delivery [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-pakistan-vdvoe-sokratyat-srok-dostavki-gruzov-678276-2024/>

<sup>153</sup> Contest of Belarusian-Pakistani scientific and technical projects for 2025-2027 [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/objavlen-konkurs-belorussko-pakistanskikh-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-na-2025-2027-gody-689099-.2025/>

<sup>154</sup> Belarusian enterprises reached agreements for \$17 million at the business forum in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-predpriatii-a-na-business-forume-pakistan-dostigli-dogo-vorennoستي-na-17-mln-677972-2024/>

documents totalling more than \$17 million were signed.

Among those signed was a distribution agreement on co-operation for five years between Bellakt Open Joint Stock Company and Nutrifood & Pharmaceuticals. JSC Belsvetmet and the logistics company Raas International Trading signed a contract for the supply of white tinplate for 2025. In the industrial sector, the following documents were signed: a memorandum of intent between Belshina and Shahzad Trade Links to sell Belshina products on the Pakistani market; a cooperation agreement between Minsk Motor Plant (MM3) and the same Pakistani company to supply Belarusian products in 2025. In the field of medicine, Belmedpreparaty RUE signed a memorandum of co-operation with Bio Medical System in the field of registration and supply of medicines. Business contacts have also been established in the field of veterinary drugs supply - Belvitunifarm and Mustafa Brothers signed a relevant contract"<sup>155</sup>.

Within the framework of this forum, Pakistani business associations saw a significant potential for the development of electronic exchange trade with Belarus in order to use the full range of opportunities of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTE) to conclude import-export deals, establish new business contacts and obtain up-to-date price and marketing information. At the same time, "the products of the Belarusian timber industry are of the greatest interest to Pakistani business circles. In this connection, it is planned to concentrate efforts on attracting large Pakistani timber importers to BUTB in order to organise their regular participation in the exchange trading in sawn timber"<sup>156</sup>. This work will be supported by the All Pakistan Timber Sellers Association, which has expressed its willingness to assist in educating the industry about the opportunities and benefits of the exchange mechanism. Similar arrangements have been made by BUTB with the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Pakistan Commodity Exchange. For statistical purposes, only two companies from Pakistan are currently accredited at the Belarusian exchange. So the most important task at this stage is to increase the number of Pakistani traders. Already at this forum, several Pakistani companies trading in ferrous metals have announced their intention to sell ferrous metal products through the BUTB.

In February 2025, Minsk hosted the **8th meeting of the Joint Belarusian-Pakistani Commission on Trade and Economic Co-operation**, which reviewed the prospects for bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas. During this meeting, the parties noted that Belarus and Pakistan "have extensive interaction in the areas of agriculture, technology, industrial sector and growth in various sectors for the overall mutual

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<sup>155</sup> Industry and Medicine. What companies of Belarus and Pakistan agreed on at the forum in Islamabad [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/promvshlennost-i-meditsina-o-chem-dogovorilis-kompanii-belarusi-i-pakistana-na-forum-v-islamabade-678090-2024/>

<sup>156</sup> Pakistani business is ready to join the exchange trade with Belarus [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/pakistanskij-biznes-gotov-vkluchatsia-v-birzhevuiu-torgovlju-s-belarusiju-678024-2024/>

benefit of both countries"<sup>157</sup>. It should be recalled that in November 2024, during the visit of the Belarusian leader to Pakistan, the task was set to transfer all protocol agreements into the format of practical implementation with the signing of relevant agreements and contracts aimed at increasing bilateral trade turnover. For reference, it should be noted that the trade turnover between Belarus and Pakistan in 2024 "grew by 4.6% to \$50.3 million, with 70% being <... > products of <sup>158</sup> industrial enterprises"<sup>158</sup>. At the 8th meeting of the commission, the Belarusian side expressed its interest in increasing supplies of industrial products, exploring options for "setting up service centres and joint assembly plants"<sup>159</sup>, including electric transport, as well as its readiness to share knowledge and experience in science and technology, education, and personnel training with Pakistani partners. And already on the margins of the commission meeting it was stated that "Pakistan is interested in the supply of BELARUS tractors with a capacity of more than 100 hp" [4].<sup>160</sup> [4]. At MTZ, a delegation from this South Asian country discussed plans to organise assembly production of Belarusian machines on Pakistani soil and to increase the supply of tractors to the Pakistani market. Also in February this year, MM3 signed a contract with the Pakistani company Shahzad Trade Link for the supply of spare parts and discussed promotion, sales, and service of the company's products in Pakistan, as "expanding cooperation with Pakistani companies in industry provides excellent potential for further sustainable growth of both countries"<sup>161</sup>. And in May 2025, Belarusian enterprises will participate in a collective exposition at the **International Trade and Industrial Fair (ITIF)** in the Pakistani city of Karachi, which "will help in finding new partners and developing initiatives with existing counterparties"<sup>162</sup>. ITIF is considered the leading international specialised exhibition in the South Asian region. Among its major sections are: agriculture, automotive, machine tools, energy, metallurgy, construction, mining and petrochemicals. More than 350 companies from China, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Belgium, Germany take part in it annually, and the number of visitors exceeds 40 thousand. It was also noted at the 8th meeting of the commission that among the priorities of

<sup>157</sup> What directions of economic cooperation with Belarus Pakistan plans to develop [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/kakie-napravleniya-ekonomicheskogo-sotrudnichestva-s-belarusiiu-planiruet-razvivat-pakistan-694839-2025/>

<sup>158</sup> Trade turnover between Belarus and Pakistan increased by 4.6% last year [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/tovarooborot-belarusi-i-pakistan-za-proshlyi-god-vyros-na-46-694826-2025/>

<sup>159</sup> Joint productions and agriculture. Kushnarenko on the prospects of co-operation with Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/sovmestnye-proizvodstva-i-selskoe-hoziaistvo-kushnarenko-o-perspektivah-sotrudnichestva-s-pakistanom-694824-2025/>

<sup>160</sup> Pakistan is interested in the supply of BELARUS tractors with a capacity of more than 100 hp. [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/pakistan-zainteresovan-v-postavkah-tractorov-belarus-moschnostiiu-bolee-1s-100-695124-2025/>

<sup>161</sup> Promotion, sales, service. What directions Minsk Motor Plant will develop in Pakistan [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/regions/view/prodvizhenie-prodazhi-servis-kakie-napravleniya-budet-razvivat-minskij-motornyi-zavod-v-pakistane-696802-2025/>

<sup>162</sup> "This is the leading industrial exhibition in South Asia". Belarusian enterprises present their products in Karachi [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/eto-veduschaia-promyshlennai-vystavka-v-juzhnoi-azii-belorusskie-predpriatia-prezentuiut-697211-2025/>



cooperation between the two countries is interaction in the field of agriculture, which includes not only the supply of food products, but also products for animal husbandry, seed production, additives and veterinary drugs. And the Pakistani side is interested in expanding bilateral partnerships in this area. We would add that "in 2024, the trade turnover of food and agricultural commodities between the states has already increased by 36.5 per cent compared to the level of 2023"<sup>163</sup>. Interestingly, the largest share of Belarusian exports to this South Asian country was occupied by supplies of baby food, namely cereal porridge. Exports of Belarusian milk and dairy products to Pakistan also grew threefold in 2024. These include supplies of skimmed milk powder and whey. Domestic producers intend to increase exports to this country and expand the range of goods for mutual trade. For this reason, active bilateral work on certification, production and supply of veterinary vaccines of domestic production is already underway. Opportunities for co-operation in livestock breeding and fishery were also discussed. Having considered the areas of co-operation in detail, the parties adopted a number of specific decisions. A few days after the 8th meeting of the Joint Commission, the **5th meeting of the Belarusian-Pakistani Commission for Cooperation in Science and Technology** was held, where the parties reviewed the current state and prospects of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries. It should be noted that "by 2025, three joint scientific and technical projects in the field of organic farming, nanotechnologies in electronics, new materials were successfully implemented between leading institutes of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Belarusian State University and the Pakistan Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, National University of Science and Technology of Pakistan"<sup>164</sup>. And the priority areas of joint activities for 2025-2026 have already been identified. These include artificial intelligence, medicine, biotechnology, energy, engineering and agriculture. In this regard, as mentioned above, a competition for joint Belarusian-Pakistani scientific and technical projects for 2025-2027 was announced in January 2025. To summarise, it should be added that the two sides have already held eight meetings of the joint Belarusian-Pakistani commission on trade and economic cooperation over the past nine years. In addition, there are already eight working groups between the countries, which are developing co-operation across a wide range of interaction. All this should contribute to the expansion of the trade and economic partnership and the implementation of a joint approach to regional economic integration.

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<sup>163</sup> Belarus in 2024 increased export of dairy products to Pakistan three times [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-v-2024-godu-narastila-eksport-molochki-v-pakistan-v-tri-raza-695200-2025/>

<sup>164</sup> Medicine and biotechnology. Belarus and Pakistan set priorities of scientific and technical partnership [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/meditsina-i-biotekhnologii-belarus-i-pakistan-opredelili-prioritety-nauchno-tehnicheskogo-partnerstva-695854-2025/>



### A year of breakthrough solutions

The past, 2024, was a breakthrough year in the development of

In June, the Belarusian leader paid the first-ever state visit to the **East Asian** country in the history of interstate relations between Belarus and **Mongolia**. Recall that since the establishment of Belarusian-Mongolian diplomatic relations in January 1992, Minsk and Ulan Bator have been actively developing trade and economic cooperation, building partnerships between Belarusian and Mongolian regions, strengthening inter-parliamentary contacts, and continuing to implement joint projects in the field of education. Nevertheless, in January 2024, at the **7th meeting of the joint Belarusian-Mongolian intergovernmental commission** on trade and economic cooperation in Minsk, the participants noted that the mutual trade turnover did not reflect the potential of Belarus and Mongolia. For this reason, the task was set - everything should be done to make the relationship between the two countries strategic.

In March 2024, an official visit of a Belarusian delegation led by the head of the Foreign Ministry to Mongolia took place, during which an agreement was reached to raise the relations between Minsk and Ulaanbaatar to a higher level in order to intensify the whole range of contacts between the parties at the level of industries, economic entities, and business circles. In fact, it was said that "a new stage is beginning in the relations between Belarus and Mongolia"<sup>165</sup>. In this regard, the two countries planned to develop a roadmap for cooperation until 2026, which will include supplies of Belarusian agricultural machinery and equipment, municipal and road repair machines, emergency response equipment, lift equipment, quarry equipment, and a full cycle of creating high-class and highly efficient agricultural production complexes specially adapted to the needs and requirements of Mongolian customers. The fact is that "Mongolia is actively developing, so there is a growing interest of Mongolian consumers in goods, including high-efficiency machinery and foodstuffs"<sup>166</sup>. In this context, the parties have already discussed the possibility of opening specialised trading platforms both in Minsk and Ulaanbaatar.

But the most urgent issue for this East Asian country is the development of the agro-industrial sector, as they intend to modernise a lot of things in agriculture, especially in the livestock sector, so that it goes from extensive nomadic to intensive state, as well as to create joint production of agricultural machinery for subsequent equipping of Mongolian farms. During the visit it was noted that the sectoral ministries of the parties "have prepared a roadmap for the development of cooperation in agriculture, there are prescribed projects and steps for their implementation. These include the construction of new and modernisation of existing full-cycle dairy farms, supplies of

<sup>165</sup> Aleinik: a new stage begins in the relations between Belarus and Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/aleinik-v-otnoshenijah-belarusi-i-mongolii-nachinaetsja-novyj-etap-621446-2024/>

<sup>166</sup> Belarus and Mongolia will develop a road map of cooperation until 2026 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/amp/politics/view/belarus-i-mongolija-razrabotajut-dorozhnuju-kartu-sotrudnichestva-do-2026-goda-621451-2024>

cattle of Belarusian selection, veterinary medicines, seeds, specialised equipment, training and professional development of Mongolian specialists and, of course, supplies of agricultural machinery"<sup>167</sup>.

There are already several production facilities in Mongolia that co-operate with Belarus. For example, the APU plant for the production of dairy, carbonated and alcoholic beverages, which uses milk powder from Belarus to produce dairy products and Belarusian malt for beer production. In March 2024, Minsk Tractor Works signed a roadmap with the Ministry of Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia to organise deliveries of 80-350 horsepower tractors and ploughs. The roadmap outlines a plan of deliveries for 2024-2025 with the prospect of cooperation until 2027. In March, the Belarusian side held talks with the Mongolian State Agricultural Corporation to supply breeding cattle, milking equipment, and the construction of dairy production facilities for the needs of Mongolian farmers.

In addition, as part of this topic, following the meetings in March 2024 in Ulan Bator, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) planned to diversify its commodity structure and increase the volume of exchange deliveries of Belarusian agro-industrial products to the Mongolian market. All the more so because "in September 2023, the first Mongolian stockbroker, United Meres Machinery, which has been working in the Belarusian market for quite a long time, was accredited at BUTB",<sup>168</sup>. And the first transaction with the participation of a resident from Mongolia was concluded in January 2024. But so far only products of Belarusian sugar mills have been supplied to the Mongolian market. Almost one and a half thousand tonnes of this product were sold for a total of more than \$770 thousand. The work in this direction will be continued in the near future. Besides, "Mongolia is interested in importing Belarusian milk powder and butter. An agreement on co-operation on these commodity items has already been reached with four potential buyers - large food industry enterprises"<sup>169</sup>.

A separate topic is the co-operation between Belarus and Mongolia in the sphere of emergency response. It is known that "thanks to the work of Belarusian equipment more than 13 thousand people have already been rescued and property damage worth over \$20 million has been prevented"<sup>170</sup>. The parties discussed several areas of prospective cooperation in this area. Firstly, Mongolian partners are interested in purchasing special fire-fighting equipment of Pozhsnab LLC on the basis of MAZ

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<sup>167</sup> What are Belarus and Mongolia ready to offer each other? Details of Aleinik's talks in the government [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://www.belta.by/politics/view/chto-belarus-i-mongoliia-gotovv-predlozhit-drug-drugu- podrobnosti-peregovorov-aleinika-v-pravitelstve-621640-2024/>

<sup>168</sup> Zalessky, B. Ideology of pragmatism. Peculiarities of partnership in the Belarusian economy: internal and external segments / Boris Zalessky. - LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2024. - C. 146.

<sup>169</sup> BUTB plans to increase export of agricultural products to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/butb-planiruet-uvlechit- eksport-belorusskoi-selhozproduksii-v-mongoliu-622030-2024/>

<sup>170</sup> How Belarusian machinery helps to save people in Mongolia and where our milk powder is used. New details about Aleinik's visit [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/kak-belorusskaia-tehnika-pomogaet-spatat-liudei-v- mongolii-i-gde-ispolzuiut-nashe-suhoe-moloko-novye-621781-2024/>

chassis, as well as other equipment and special clothing. The parties were preparing to sign a new contract. We are talking about the delivery of more than 100 units of Belarusian fire-fighting equipment. Second, there is great interest in continuing training programmes for Mongolian specialists on the basis of specialized institutions in Belarus.

Other promising areas of Belarusian-Mongolian interaction in Ulaanbaatar included cooperation in the mining industry and modernisation of lift infrastructure in residential buildings. In addition, "emphasis was placed on the supply of municipal and passenger vehicles for the needs of Ulaanbaatar. The Mongolian side was also offered opportunities for the Belarusian side to supply rolling stock for the metro"<sup>171</sup>. In the humanitarian sphere, Minsk and Ulaanbaatar outlined projects "in the light of the large-scale state programmes that are currently being implemented in Mongolia. Including the Billion Tree Programme, which requires special training of forestry workers"<sup>172</sup>. In short, the parties agreed, expanding the legal framework of the relations between Belarus and Mongolia, to speed up the work to sign about ten bilateral documents - in agriculture, education, inter-university cooperation, emergency response, between law enforcement agencies and scientific institutions of the two countries.

In June 2024, the Presidents of the two countries signed the **Treaty on Friendly Relations and Co-operation between the Republic of Belarus and Mongolia** in Ulaanbaatar as part of the state visit of the Belarusian delegation. At the same time, the parties considered in detail the whole range of bilateral relations and concluded 14 different documents on the development of interaction in various areas, one of which was the **roadmap of co-operation between Belarus and Mongolia until 2026**. In addition, the parties adopted a memorandum of cooperation between the State Secretariat of the Security Council of Belarus and the Apparatus of the National Security Council of Mongolia; intergovernmental agreements on mutual recognition and exchange of driving licences and mutual recognition of education documents. **Two more roadmaps of cooperation were also signed: the first one - in the field of education** at the level of line ministries for 2024-2026; the second one - **in the field of agro-industrial complex** for the same three-year period. Finally, "an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Ministry of Education and Science of Mongolia was concluded, and an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation with the Mongolian Academy of Sciences was signed. A number of other memorandums were signed. They concern co-operation in the spheres of justice, tourism, environmental protection, prevention and

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<sup>171</sup> Belarus plans to supply municipal and passenger vehicles to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://www.belta.by/economics/view/belarus-planiruet-postavljat-v-mongoliju-kommunalnuiju-i-passazhirskuju-tehniku-621673-2024/>

<sup>172</sup> Transcript of the approach to the press of Minister S. Aleinik within the framework of the official visit to Mongolia (15 March 2024, Ulan Bator) [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://mfa.gov.by/press/news/mfa/bfb a13359437807. ahtml>

elimination of emergency situations, protection of industrial property"<sup>173</sup>.

Speaking about the **roadmap of co-operation between the two countries**, we note that "it contains more than 50 measures and projects in 16 sectors and areas of activity"<sup>174</sup>. To implement it, in Ulan Bator, the Belarusian Ministry of Industry and the Mongolian Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry adopted an action plan to implement the economic part of the map, which defined the areas of trade and economic interaction - the main area of mutual interest between the two countries. "The purpose of the document is to systematise Belarusian-Mongolian agreements on promising economic projects in one document and give impetus to their implementation in 2024 and beyond"<sup>175</sup>. In particular, it envisages cooperation in the supply of Belarusian machinery in various areas, as well as other Belarusian and Mongolian products - foodstuffs, light industry goods, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment. There are also plans to export Belarusian machinery for the Mongolian mining industry, agricultural machinery and equipment, and machines for liquidating emergencies. The sides also discussed the establishment of joint assembly plants in Mongolia, including tractors, cars, lifts, and dump trucks.

Speaking about the **roadmap for co-operation in the agro-industrial complex**, we have already pointed out above that the most urgent task for this East Asian country now is the development of the agro-industrial sector. "First of all, Mongolia plans to modernise the livestock industry. And this requires machinery, new farms and complexes"<sup>176</sup>. For this purpose, the parties plan to create a joint production of agricultural machinery for the subsequent equipping of Mongolian farms. Recall that back in January 2024 at the 7th IGC meeting it was noted that Belarus will open a specialised centre in Mongolia. "It will be an assembly of agricultural machinery, a multi-brand centre in Mongolia, where all machinery and all technology will be presented, from sowing to harvesting crops. It's a wide range of co-operation. This includes seed production, livestock breeding, light industry, quarrying equipment"<sup>177</sup>. The second direction is meat and dairy. A cattle-breeding farm based on Belarusian technologies is planned to be built in Mongolia. It is designed for 600 cattle of loose

<sup>173</sup> Presidents of Belarus and Mongolia signed a treaty on friendship and co-operation between the two countries [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/president/view/prezidenty-belarusi-i-mongolii-podpisali-dogovor-o-druzhe-i-sotrudnichestve-dvuh-stran-638585-2024/>

<sup>174</sup> The head of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry estimates the effect of Lukashenko's visit to Mongolia in tens of millions of dollars [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/politics/view/glava-mid-belarusi-otsenivaet-effekt-ot-vizita-lukashenko-v-mongoliju-v-desjatkimillionov-dollarov-639780-2024/>

<sup>175</sup> Rogozhnik and Bolorchuluun signed an action plan to implement the economic part of the roadmap [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-i-bolorchuluun-podpisali-plan-meroprijatij-po-realizatsii-ekonomicheskoi-chasti-dorozhnoi-638692-2024/>

<sup>176</sup> Gorelik, D. Distant but close? Why Lukashenko is flying to Mongolia and what prospects are opening up between the countries / D. Gorelik // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. URL:

<https://belta.by/interview/view/dalekaja-no-blizkaja-zachem-lukashenko-letit-v-mongoliju-i-kakie-perspektivy-otkryvajutsja-mezhdu-stranami-9239/>

<sup>177</sup> Belarus plans to open a multi-brand centre in Mongolia and help in building a farm [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL:

<https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-planiruet-otkryt-v-mongolii-multibrendovyy-tsentr-i-pomoch-v-stroitelstve-farmv-638351-2024/>

housing. The third area is veterinary drugs. There is potential for cooperation in this area through Belvitunifarm, which produces a wide range of vaccines and drugs.

Speaking about the **roadmap for co-operation in education**, it should be noted that direct co-operation between higher education institutions of Belarus and Mongolia is currently implemented within the framework of 12 inter-university agreements. In June, an agreement between the governments of the two countries on mutual recognition of educational documents was adopted. In addition, "Hrodna State University named after Yanka Kupala and the Mongolian University of Science and Technology signed an agreement on cooperation. Both universities intend to set up a working group and develop a roadmap"<sup>178</sup>.

In general, the Vitebsk State Medical University, Belarusian State University, Belarusian National Technical University, Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (BSUIR) and Mozyr State Pedagogical University (MGPU) named after I.P. Shamyakin are already implementing promising scientific projects with Mongolian educational institutions. In particular, BSUIR together with the Mongolian University of Science and Technology submitted a new scientific work to the competition of the Belarusian Republican Fund for Fundamental Research and the Mongolian Fund for Science and Technology. And I.P. Shamyakin Moscow State Pedagogical University together with the Mongolian Academy of Sciences are developing a project in the field of agronomy. Other universities - the Belarusian State Agrarian Technical University (BSATU), the Pushkin Brest State University, and the Masharov Vitebsk State University - are also interested in co-operation with Mongolian partners in such areas as information and computer technologies, physics and radiophysics, chemistry and chemical technologies, ecology, biotechnology, medicine, pharmacy, agro-industrial and food technologies, and social sciences and humanities. "In March of this [2024] year, a group of managers and specialists from one of the farms in Mongolia was trained at BGATU under the advanced training programme "Innovative technologies in livestock and fodder production"<sup>179</sup>. We would like to add that the signed roadmap includes a clause on the development of academic mobility of students and teachers. Thus, Belarusian educational institutions are ready to organise training at the preparatory department for foreign students in English or Russian. A distance learning format with a programme course of eight to ten months is possible. At the same time, professional staff will be trained for specific enterprises.

During the state visit of the Belarusian delegation to Ulaanbaatar in June 2024, Belarus and Mongolia agreed to intensify cooperation in the **environmental sphere** in such areas as green economy, maximising the use of waste through its involvement in

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<sup>178</sup> Educational authorities of Belarus and Mongolia intensify training of personnel for pedagogy and science [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/obrazovatelnye-vedomstva-belarusi-i-mongolii-aktiviziruiut-podgotovku-kadrov-dlja-pedagogiki-i-i-nauki-638522-2024/>

<sup>179</sup> Belarus and Mongolia signed an agreement on mutual recognition of documents on education [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-mongolija-podpisali-soglasenie-o-vzaimnom-priznanii-dokumentov-ob-obrazovanii-638719-2024/>

economic turnover, preservation of landscape and biological diversity, and mineral exploration and mining. Earlier, in the interests of the Mongolian side, under the contract with the Belarusian Republican Fund for Fundamental Research, a research work on the topic "Humic preparations on the basis of peat, coal for green arrangement of desert territories, environmental protection" was carried out. "The aim of the work was to theoretically and experimentally substantiate the composition of humic preparations as natural compounds for green arrangement of desert territories in Mongolia"<sup>180</sup>. In June, the Belarusian side handed over to the Mongolian partners a report containing theoretical results of the work, including a preliminary assortment of woody plants resistant to moisture deficit, soil salinity and other unfavourable soil and climatic conditions close to those of Mongolia. And proposed to continue work in this direction to test the developed assortment of salt- and drought-tolerant plants directly in specific natural and climatic conditions of the regions of this East Asian country. In this context, it should be added that back in March last year the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus and the Ministry of Education and Science of Mongolia announced a **competition of joint scientific and technical projects for 2024-2025**, which will be held "in the priority areas of Belarusian-Mongolian cooperation: Agriculture, agricultural and forestry machinery and equipment, intensive animal husbandry, reforestation and breeding, crop production, history and archaeology"<sup>181</sup>. So the scientific and technical ties between the two countries will get an additional impetus to co-operation.

Returning to the state visit of the Belarusian delegation to Ulaanbaatar in June 2024, we note that a **joint Mongolian-Belarusian business forum** was held on its margins to discuss the prospects for cooperation between the business communities of the two countries. Forty Belarusian enterprises were represented at the forum, where 13 commercial documents were signed. The total amount is \$20 million. <...> For comparison: the entire trade turnover between Belarus and Mongolia at the end of 2023 was about \$30 million"<sup>182</sup>. This package of commercial contracts and agreements included proposals, including those of Belarusian industrial enterprises. In particular, "a memorandum of intentions was signed between BELAZ OJSC, its representative in the region - United Meres Machinery LLC and Ovoot Tolgoi Resources, and a memorandum of co-operation between Mogilevliftmash OJSC and the Mongolian company Ovoot Tolgoi Resources. lift organisation Best Fashion Elevators LLS"<sup>183</sup>. Also a memorandum of co-operation

<sup>180</sup> Belarus and Mongolia are interested in co-operation in the environmental sphere [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: [https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-mongolija-zainteresovany-sotrudnicchat-v-prirodoohrannoisfere-638714-2024/](https://belta.by/society/view/belarus-i-mongolija-zainteresovany-sotrudnichat-v-prirodoohrannoisfere-638714-2024/).

<sup>181</sup> Contest of Belarusian-Mongolian scientific and technical projects announced for 2024-2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/objavlen-konkurs-belorussko-mongolskih-nauchno-tehnicheskikh-proektov-na-2024-2025-gody-623638-2024/>.

<sup>182</sup> Mongolian-Belarusian business forum has already brought about \$20 million to the piggy bank of bilateral relations [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/mongolo-belorusskii-biznes-forum-uzhe-prines-okolo-20-mln-v-kopilku-dvustoronnih-otnoshenii-638654-2024/>.

<sup>183</sup> Export potential of the Ministry of Industry's enterprises presented at the Belarusian-Mongolian business



was signed by JSC "UKH "BobruiskAgromash" and Mongolian COGS "Agricultural Corporation", as the main interest for the market of this East Asian country are machines for forage harvesting. And "since 2021 more than 250 units of fodder harvesting agricultural machinery of "Bobruiskagromash" have been shipped to Mongolia"<sup>184</sup>. In the same package there was an agreement to sign a contract for approximately 14.5 million euros for the supply of fire and rescue equipment. The fact is that the Mongolian partners received "about €12 million worth of Belarusian equipment in 2020. And it is successfully used here, and in difficult conditions"<sup>185</sup>. After the visit of the Belarusian delegation to the Mongolian capital, Belarus and Mongolia promptly started implementing the agreements in a wide range of areas. Already in September 2024, the parties "agreed to supply Belarusian machinery and equipment for industry, agriculture, machinery for emergency response"<sup>186</sup>, and also discussed the purchase of special machinery from Belarus for fire and disaster response. In the same September, the exposition of Belarusian manufacturers **Made in Belarus** was presented at the **Ulaanbaatar Partnership 2024** international multi-sectoral exhibition held in Ulaanbaatar.

This exhibition forum covered a wide range of thematic sections - from the food sector to healthcare, construction and heavy industry. And Belarus is among the main traditional participants of this exhibition. This time MAZ presented a production line of cargo, passenger, special and trailer vehicles. "As part of the Made in Belarus exposition, one of the world market leaders in the production of agricultural machinery - OJSC "Gomselmash", presenting developments and machinery, including combine harvesters GS12A1, GS400 and G5, self-propelled mowers CS100, CS200"<sup>187</sup>. BKM Holding showed a scale model of a trolleybus model 32100D of Olgerd series with increased autonomous travel up to twenty kilometres. The sphere of design and production of professional machines, equipment for catering and trade facilities, food industry was presented by the specialised company Torgmash OJSC. Among the exhibits of Beltopgaz, peat products for non-fuel purposes were demonstrated: top peat of various fractions, peat nutrient soils and cover material for growing champignons on the basis of peat. During the exhibition, Belarusian participants held effective business meetings and negotiations with representatives of major trading companies in

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forum business forum [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/eksportnyi-potentsial-predpriatii-minproma-prezentovan-na-belorussko-mongolskom-biznes-forume-638695-2024/>

<sup>184</sup> "Bobruiskagromash" is working out deliveries to Zimbabwe and Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/bobruiskagromash-prorabatyvaet-postavki-v-zimbabve-i-mongoliu-640079-2024/>

<sup>185</sup> Rogozhnik about Belarusian equipment in Mongolia: our advantage in reliability [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/rogozhnik-o-belorusskoi-tehnike-v-mongolii-nashe-nreimushchestvo-v-nadezhnosti-638625-2024/>

<sup>186</sup> Development Bank: Ready to Offer Comfortable Terms for Financing Supplies from Belarus to Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/bank-razvitiia-gotovyy-predlagat-komfortnye-usloviia-finansirovaniia-postavok-iz-belarusi-v-mongoliu-662879-2024/>

<sup>187</sup> Made in Belarus exposition is presented at the multidisciplinary exhibition in Mongolia [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/ekspozitsiia-made-in-belarus-predstavlena-na-mnogootraslevoi-vystavke-v-mongolii-664105-2024/>



Mongolia, during which new projects of trade and economic co-operation were outlined.

All these facts show that "2024 has become a turning point in the development of Belarusian-Mongolian ties"<sup>188</sup>. Having signed an agreement on friendly relations and cooperation last June, Belarus and Mongolia are reaching a higher and qualitatively new level of bilateral relations, which opens up promising opportunities to create more favourable conditions for the development of trade, economic and cooperation projects.

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<sup>188</sup> Grishkevich. A. Mongolian cashmere and Belarusian milk. The Ambassador of Mongolia told about the exchange of goods and ties with Belarus / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/intervju-mongolskij-kashemir-i-belorusskoe-moloko-posol-mongolii-rasskazal-pro-exchange-tovarami-i-688751-2025/>

## CHAPTER 10

### Discover new economic opportunities

**The United Arab Emirates (UAE)** is Belarus' most important partner in the **Middle East**. The two countries seek to strengthen co-operation in various areas. This is evidenced, **firstly**, by the existing legal framework of the Belarusian-Emirati relations. As of the end of November 2024, the two sides had already "signed 14 agreements and 26 memoranda of understanding in the political, economic and cultural fields"<sup>189</sup>. **Secondly**, Belarus and the UAE are seeking to increase mutual trade. Among the documents already signed, there are a number of economic agreements that aim to promote trade turnover and open markets. In this regard, we note that "the volume of trade turnover in non-oil goods between the two countries in 2023 increased five times compared to 2022"<sup>190</sup>. **Third**, Emirati investments in the real sector of the Belarusian economy have increased in recent years, making the UAE the third largest foreign investor. **Fourth**, the two sides have established co-operation in the field of food security. After all, "Belarus exports agricultural and food products to the UAE, which contributes to achieving the goals of the national food security strategy, which the UAE has identified as one of its priorities until 2051"<sup>191</sup>. **Fifthly**, enterprises and businessmen from both countries take part in economic forums and exhibitions held in both countries, which facilitate the establishment of contacts between businessmen and investors from the two countries, which strengthens trade turnover, increases its volume and has a positive impact on the economies of both countries. In recent years, Belarusian exporters have been particularly active in two international exhibitions in the UAE - **Gulfood** and **IDEX**.

**Gulfood International Food and Beverage Exhibition** is the world's largest and most influential annual industry event. The exhibition brings together food manufacturers, importers, distributors and restaurateurs. The show is particularly popular with visitors from the Gulf region as more than 95 per cent of food here is imported. In February 2023, this exhibition forum gathered in Dubai **for the 28th time**, where "more than 5 thousand companies from 125 countries"<sup>192</sup> took part and where the Belarusian exposition **Belarus - the Taste of Nature** was presented. The export potential of the Grodno region enterprises, which are part of the

<sup>189</sup> Grishkevich, A. Ambassador: the strategies of the UAE and Belarus are aimed at diversity enhanced by scientific and technological progress / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/posol-strategii-oe-i-belarusi-napravleny-na-raznoobrazie-usilivaemoe-nauchno-tehnicheskimi-progressom-678974-2024/>

<sup>190</sup> Grishkevich, A. Ambassador of the UAE: Belarus has economic potential and a lot of investment opportunities / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/posol-oe-belarus-obladaet-ekonomicheskimi-potentsialom-i-mnogozhestvom-investitsionnyh-vozmozhnostei-679014-2024/>

<sup>191</sup> Grishkevich, A. Ambassador of the UAE: in recent years the volume of Emirati investments in the real sector of the Belarusian economy has increased / A. Grishkevich // [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/posol-oe-v-poslednie-gody-obъем-emiratskih-investitsij-v-realnyj-sektor-ekonomiki-belarusi-679016-2024/>

<sup>192</sup> Belarusian exposition is presented at the exhibition of food industry in Dubai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belorussskaia-ekspozitsija-predstavlena-na-vystavke-pischevoi-promyshlennosti-v-dubae-551618-2023/>

Grodnomyasomolprom holding, was presented on the largest scale. Among the participants of the exposition were dairy producers OJSC "Molochny Mir", OJSC "Lidsky Dairy Canning Plant" and its branches - "Smorgon Dairy Products" and "Novogrudskiy Dary", as well as Volkovysk OJSC "Bellakt", OJSC "Babushkina Krynka" - the managing company of the holding "Mogilev Dairy Company" "Babushkina Krynka" and OJSC "Rogachev Dairy Canning Plant". The meat industry was represented by

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Slonim meat processing plant and Volkovysk meat processing plant. Confectionery products were demonstrated to the guests of the exhibition by SOAO Kommunarka. The products were also brought to Dubai by OODO "FIRMA ABC, management company of the holding company

"Grodnomyasomolprom, JSC Lidakhleboprodukt and Smorgon Bakery. In addition, Santa Bremore and Savushkin Product took part with a separate exhibition stand. Among the new products from Belarusian companies were dry milk mixes for ice cream and yoghurt from OJSC Babushkina Krynka, beef steaks from Volkovysk meat processing plant, and protein sweets from Kommunarka.

Within the framework of this exhibition, domestic enterprises agreed to supply their products to distributors, wholesale buyers and food manufacturers from various countries of the world. Rogachev Dairy Canning Plant signed a contract of intent with a UAE resident company for the supply of canned milk in the assortment for an estimated amount of \$500,000. The enterprise also held negotiations with companies from Singapore, Kenya, New Zealand, Libya and China. Possibilities of condensed milk supply were discussed with Qatari chains. A company from Saudi Arabia expressed special interest in condensed milk with natural coffee. Following the results of the exhibition, OJSC Babushkina Krynka, the managing company of the holding company Mogilev Dairy Company Babushkina Krynka, held negotiations on the supply of dairy products to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, India, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Israel. The company also reached agreements with Indonesia on shipment of milk powder for almost one million dollars. In addition, the businesses of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Syria, Turkey, as well as entrepreneurs of Iraq and Ghana were interested in baby food from Volkovysk Bellakg OJSC. Preliminary agreements have been reached on milk powder supplies to China with the total value of about two million dollars. Kommunarka Confectionary Factory has agreed to supply products to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, UAE, Palestine, Pakistan and India. The visitors of the exhibition were interested in the novelty of the Belarusian factory - protein candies without sugar. Slonim meat processing plant held talks with companies from Malaysia, UAE, New Zealand, Uzbekistan, China, Azerbaijan and Egypt, while Volkovysk meat processing plant held talks with potential partners from China, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Uzbekistan and Canada. "All in all, Belarusian enterprises signed contracts worth more than \$4 million at the exhibition,"<sup>193</sup>. We would like to

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<sup>193</sup> Belarusian enterprises concluded contracts for more than \$4 million at the exhibition in Dubai [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/beloruskie-predpriatiia-na-vvstavke-v-dubae->

add that Belarus presented the exposition of domestic producers Belarus - The Taste of Nature for the eighth consecutive year.

**The 29th International Exhibition of Food and Beverages Gulfood 2024** in Dubai last February gathered again more than five thousand participants from 127 countries. This time Belarusian companies presented a wide range of dairy products, including those made of milk powder, assorted cheeses and desserts. Savushkin Product presented at the exhibition a wide range of natural dairy products - both novelties and products that are already familiar to customers in the UAE. OJSC "Minsk Dairy Plant No.1" presented a lactose-free product line, vegetable-based drinks, and for the first time - dry milk shakes. Lidsky Dairy and Canning Plant OJSC and its branches exhibited a specialised line of products made of milk powder and other products.

dry dairy products, butter, frozen cottage cheese, cheese in assortment. In addition to the classic product line, Molochny Mir presented new products: lactose-free cheese and whipping cream. The stand of Volkovysk Bellact OJSC demonstrated a line of products for the nutrition of infants, pregnant women and nursing mothers. The assortment line of cheese, butter, canned milk products with Belarusian condensed milk, which is favourite in many countries, was presented at the stand of Rogachev MCC OJSC. The branch of the enterprise - "Kalinkovich Dairy Plant" - showed "fast-soluble skimmed milk powder and whole milk powder in new packages: 1kg and 400g pet cans, as well as in 25g stick packs"<sup>194</sup>. At the stand of JSC "Lidakhleboproduktog" wheat and rye flour, pasta from hard and soft wheat varieties, flour semi-finished products were presented. Among the presented products there were new products: vegetable fibre and wheat germ flakes. Slonimsky Meat Processing Plant presented beef, sausages, canned meat and meat-savoury. During the Gulfood exhibition, representatives of Belarusian companies held meetings and negotiations with distributors and wholesale buyers from many countries.

In February 2025, the **30th anniversary International Exhibition of Food and Beverages Gulfood 2025** in Dubai presented "more than 1 million items of products and goods from 5.5 thousand exhibitors from 129 countries, more than 130 thousand visitors from 195 countries"<sup>195</sup>. For the tenth time the exclusive partner and organiser of the participation of Belarusian enterprises in the international exhibition Gulfood presented an updated exposition **Belarus. The Taste of Nature**, made in the image of an openwork house, stylistically decorated with elements from the decorative and applied art of the Belarusians - vytynanka, which by decision of the Intergovernmental Committee in 2024 included in the list of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO. Thirteen Belarusian enterprises presented their products.

Within the framework of the exhibition, a white mould cheese, which has just

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[zakliuchili-dogovory-na-bolee-chem-4-mln-552857-2023/](https://zakliuchili-dogovory-na-bolee-chem-4-mln-552857-2023/)

<sup>194</sup> Belarusian exposition is presented at the exhibition of food industry in Dubai [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/beloruskaia-ekspozitsii-a-predstavl>

<sup>195</sup> Unique raw materials, dessert paste, exclusive flour. What Belarus presented at the exhibition Gulfood [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL:

<https://belta.by/society/view/unikalnye-svry-desertnaja-pasta-ekskluzivnaja-muka-cto-belarus-predstavila-na-vystavke-gulfood-696467-2025/>

appeared on the Belarusian market, was presented by the enterprise Minsk Dairy Plant No. 1, OJSC - the managing company of the First Dairy holding. Among the exclusive novelties of the company are also cheeses with blue mould. First Dairy presented, among other things, dried dairy products from natural cow's milk, hard cheeses, butter, glazed cheeses, sterilised line of dairy products. Innovative dairy products - vitamin D3 enriched milk sweets, as well as dried dairy products and classic cheeses - were demonstrated by OJSC Babushkina Krynka. The company also demonstrated new products, including cheese with paprika, girolle with chanterelles and Norwegian cheese. Especially for the exhibition the company exhibited glazed cottage cheese curds with different flavours. Dairy products, liquid and dry baby food, dessert group, including cheese, cakes, chocolate sausage, popular dessert paste, was presented by the flagship of the industry - Volkovysk Bellakt OJSC. In addition to the well-known products, new products were also presented: dry food

baby food, milk sweets, coffee and cocoa drinks, as well as dry specialised drinks for the nutrition of middle-aged and elderly people and young people. A wide product line of sausages, beef semi-finished products, canned products was demonstrated by Slonimsky Meat Processing Plant. At the stand were presented new finished products that meet the requirements of the system of voluntary certification "Halal". The enterprise JSC "Lidakhleboprodukt" presented flour, flour semi-finished products, mixed fodder and premixes, including a novelty - ptitim from hard wheat varieties; Smorgon bakery products combine - oat flour, flour from whole micronised wheat and rye grain, rapeseed oil, assortment line of instant flakes; OJSC Milkavita - a wide range of dried dairy products, ultra-pasteurised milk and cream, butter, cheeses, including aged cheeses; Lida Dairy Canning Plant - a product line of dried dairy products, sweet butter, cottage cheese, a number of cheese novelties from its subsidiary Novogrudskiye Dary. Lactose-free milk and a number of assortment products, including commercial cases of Kalinkovich Dairy Plant, were shown by Rogachev Milk Canning Plant, holder of the State Quality Mark. Slutsk Cheese Factory offered a wide range of dry dairy products, glazed cheese, sweet cream butter and chocolate butter, ultra-pasteurised milk, lactose-free line - milk, butter, yoghurts, hard and extra-hard cheeses. OJSC Molochny Mir paid special attention to a number of product offerings, including lactose-free sterilised milk, cheeses with original fillings, and milk powder in innovative packaging designed specifically for ease of use in the retail segment.

Another interesting fact about the participation of the Belarusian side in the 30th International Food Exhibition Gulfood: following the participation of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUTB) in this exhibition forum, agreements were reached to increase exports of domestic agricultural products to the United Arab Emirates and other countries of the Middle East. To this end, on the fields of Gulfood held talks with more than 30 distributor companies products

Many of them have expressed their willingness to use the BUTB e-platform to purchase Belarusian milk powder, whey powder and frozen meat semi-finished

products. Expanding the pool of Emirati importers accredited on BUTB will create prerequisites for increasing exchange exports to the UAE, which reached \$43 million in 2024. Last year, participants from the UAE were among the top five largest buyers of Belarusian goods at the exchange trading. At the same time, the share of agricultural products in the total volume of transactions concluded by Emirati companies was 80 per cent, while the remaining 20 per cent was provided by the export of sawn timber. In terms of agricultural commodities, "in 2024, mainly skimmed milk powder and amino acids were supplied to the UAE through the exchange. In 2025, whole milk powder was added to these items. Active work is underway to increase sales of Belarusian-made amino acids; since the beginning of the year the amount of exchange transactions on their sale in the UAE exceeded \$20.5 million"<sup>196</sup>. It only remains to add that as of 1 February 2025, 33 residents from this Middle Eastern country have already been accredited at BUTB. In addition, during the Gilfood exhibition, BUTB agreed to establish a partnership with the Dubai Gold and Commodities Exchange to create additional opportunities to attract UAE business circles to the exchange commodity market of Belarus.

As for the **IDEX** exhibition forum, it is the largest international exhibition of armaments and military equipment. In February 2023, the Belarusian stand in Abu Dhabi displayed "modern and promising innovative developments of nine enterprises of the defence sector of the country's economy, as well as natural and mock-up samples of products of such Belarusian manufacturers as OJSC AGAT - Control Systems, OJSC KB Radar and OJSC 140 Repair Plant"<sup>197</sup>.

Two years later - in February 2025 - at the **IDEX 2025 international exhibition of armaments and military equipment**, Belarus presented already "more than 150 diverse samples of armaments and military equipment that meet the most advanced global trends in the development of armaments"<sup>198</sup>. In particular, the Belarusian armourers showed wheeled and tracked robots, as well as the Berserk robotic firing system, which allows effective fire against manpower or low-flying drones and helicopters. The complex is highly manoeuvrable, with high cross-country capability. This allows the "Berserk" to be used, among other things, to protect the perimeter of an object. "The maximum distance of the robot from the operator's position is 5 kilometres in line of sight and 1 kilometre in a mixed urban environment. The aiming range is up to 1 km. But the UAV can recognise a UAV from a distance of 3 km. Armoured vehicles or helicopters respectively from 6 km and 10 km"<sup>199</sup>. Another

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<sup>196</sup> BUTB will help the growth of supplies of Belarusian agricultural products to the Middle East market [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/butb-pomozhet-rostu-postavok-belorusskoi-selhozproduksii-na-rvnok-blizhnego-vostoka-696695-2025/>

<sup>197</sup> Belarusian innovative developments are presented at the international exhibition IDEX-2023 in the UAE [Electronic resource]. - 2023. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belorusskie-innovatsionnye-razrabotki-predstavleny-na-mezhdunarodnoj-vystavke-idx-2023-v-oae-551861-2023/>

<sup>198</sup> More than 150 samples of weapons and equipment will be presented by Goskomvoenprom in the UAE at the IDEX exhibition [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL: <https://belta.by/society/view/bolee-150-obraztsov-vooruzheniya-i-tehniki-predstavit-goskomvoenprom-v-oae-na-vystavke-idx-695015-2025/>

<sup>199</sup> Belarusian armourers will present wheeled and caterpillar robots at the exhibition in the UAE [Electronic



Belarusian novelty at IDEX 2025 is the Sapphire rocket-propelled grenade launcher system, which has such advantages as "light weight, multifunctional warhead, programmable explosive device, through which both contact and trajectory modes of operation are realised. Another feature of the Sapphire is the ability to cluster and fire in a salvo"<sup>200</sup>. In addition, there is high potential to adapt the product to different carriers. Within the framework of this exhibition, the Belarusian State Committee for Defence Industry held negotiations with the independent Emirati state organisation Tawazun Council, which works closely with the UAE Ministry of Defence and security services, during which "emphasis was placed on the creation of joint high-tech products based on the existing competences of the parties"<sup>201</sup>, as well as with Edge Holding, where priority projects were identified and specific practical steps were worked out for their further implementation.

All these facts show that co-operation between Belarus and the UAE has continued to develop progressively in recent years. "At the same time, bilateral contacts are characterised by trustworthiness, wide coverage of topics and areas, and active dynamics"<sup>202</sup>. In 2025, the two countries plan to hold the next meeting of the Belarusian-Emirati Business Council, and the UAE Culture Days in Minsk are also scheduled. In addition, there is a significant prospect for the development of bilateral interregional cooperation, further strengthening of interaction in the field of food security, expansion of constructive interaction in the field of standardisation and certification. Thus, the parties are ready to implement joint initiatives and projects that open up new economic opportunities for Belarus and the United Arab Emirates.

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<sup>200</sup> . Belarusian grenade launcher system "Sapphire" will be presented at the exhibition of military equipment in the UAE [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL:

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<sup>201</sup> Goskomvoenprom and Emirati Tawazun are interested in creating joint high-tech products [Electronic resource]. - 2025. - URL:

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<sup>202</sup> Belarus and the UAE plan to hold a meeting of the business council in 2025 [Electronic resource]. - 2024. - URL: <https://belta.by/economics/view/belarus-i-oae-planirujut-provesti-v-2025-godu-zasedanie-delovogo-soveta-679011-2024/>

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